

## ReGeneration: The largest employment and training program for young graduates in Greece

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**ReGeneration** is the largest and most multi-stakeholder paid placement and training program in Greece, aiming at democratizing the opportunity for post-academic training and professional development of young graduates in Greece. Through its extended experience, ReGeneration has amassed invaluable expertise and knowledge that fosters the continuous amplification of its social impact.

### ReGeneration aims to :

- **Boost youth employability** by incubating opportunities for graduates and young professionals to thrive, regardless of background, gender, disability, or social class.
- **Fight youth unemployment and brain drain** by serving as a cross-sector ecosystem for personal and professional development, vocational training, and entry-level jobs.
- **Bridge the skills gap** by enabling multi-stakeholder innovation platforms and highly personalized learning opportunities across education-to-employment pathways.
- **Drive Greece's digital workplace transformation** by serving as a knowledge transfer center on the Future of Work and by leading impact-oriented initiatives among universities, companies, government entities, civil society, and individuals.

### The ReGeneration process

**ReGeneration follows a holistic four-step approach to identify the most high-caliber young talent:**

1. **Mapping the junior talent “market”:** graduates and the market itself by monitoring long and short-term corporate needs for junior candidates. These insights guide the design and planning of strategic initiatives, programs and partnerships. Participation in the program is done through applications during respective program cycles and is based on four criteria: graduates/postgraduates, up to 29 or 35 years old, with 0-3 years of work experience in the field of the candidates’ studies, and community involvement through extracurricular activities.

#### 2. Rigorous selection process in two stages:

a) Game-based assessment: Psychometric tests designed by global sector leader, Arctic Shores.

b) Live assessment center: 30min behavioral interviews conducted by seasoned executives who assess the candidates’ overall profile and fit to the program and select the final candidates for ReGeneration.

3. **Training on soft and hard skills:** 50 hours of soft skills training with an emphasis on personal and professional development. 80-250 hours of hard skills training on cutting-edge, emerging sectors (Coding, Data Analytics, Big Data, AI, etc.) that present a serious talent shortage, via ReGeneration Academy, the program’s up/re-skilling incubator. Graduates also receive mentoring from top professionals and have the

opportunity to give back by offering 25 hours of community service in selected NGOs.

4. **Placement:** ReGeneration is democratizing opportunity by actively connecting its graduates to meaningful careers in organizations around Greece, leveraging its network of 1600+ companies.



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It is one of the European countries where youth unemployment is at its highest level before Spain and Italy. To counter this situation different actions exist, such as the European Youth employment initiative, to help financially and technically the next generation.

Agriculture represents only 3% of the GDP and employs 11,4% of the national workforce. Even though rural areas represent 82% of the country and regroups 43% of the population it is highly fragmented with almost half of the farms having a size of less than 2 ha. The economic comeback the country has experienced is especially due to the tourism sector, which represents 20% of the GDP and 73,3M of the workforce, and structural improvements. The future's looking good, growth is increasing and shows a rate of +6,1% in 2021 that is why investing and supporting youth finding their place in the job market is essential for Greece's overall recovery.

### ***Unemployment in Greece: Managing in times of COVID-19 and the Ukraine-Russia conflict***

Stretching between Europe, the Balkan, the Near East and the Mediterranean Greece is a crossroads country of 10,7 million inhabitants with more than 1/3 of its space being islands - of which 173 are inhabited. After the economic crisis that started in 2009, Greece had to face austerity policies financed by the EU, the IMF and the ECB to mitigate the effects and avoid national chaos. In April 2022, the last bits were paid to the IMF two years in advance but the country remains one of the most indebted countries - compared to its GDP - in the region (189,6%).

The country has an unemployment rate of 14,7% - that reaches 35,5% for youth. 11% of the latter are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

### **Supporters**

The organization counts numerous successful collaborations thus far, working closely with many admirable and reputable global organizations, both from the public and private sector.

To this day, ReGeneration has designed and implemented more than 70 up/reskilling Academies, with emphasis on emerging economic sectors, with the valuable support of strategic partners such as Piraeus Bank, Microsoft, TITAN Group, INCO-Work in Tech, New Agriculture - New Generation, Elbisco, EY, Sunlight, US Embassy in Athens, AB Vassilopoulos and many more. ReGeneration's expertise and tangible social impact speaks for its trustworthiness, while its plug-and-play model makes it one of the most in

demand CSR<sup>1</sup> initiatives among the corporate ecosystem of Greece. The first organizations to believe in ReGeneration's vision were Coca-Cola and The Hellenic Initiative, making them the core supporters of the program, while in the past it has also been supported by The Coca-Cola Foundation and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation.

### **ReGeneration Academies for Food Innovation powered by New Agriculture - New Generation**

The food and beverage sector is one of the largest employers in Greece presenting a growing demand for executives proficient in specialized digital skills. In the uncertain environment created by the pandemic, the critical role of the agri-food sector and the food supply chain was even more prominent.

To tackle the aforementioned challenges, ReGeneration in collaboration with [“New Agriculture New Generation”](#) designed and implemented two innovative Academies providing almost 80 young food scientists, up to 29 years old, with the necessary training, support and network to secure a role in the food industry sector. In 2020 we created the ReGeneration Academy for Food Innovation powered by New Agriculture - New Generation, sponsored by [Stavros Niarchos Foundation \(SNF\)](#), an organization that provides donations to nonprofit organizations and programs worldwide that are expected to bring tangible, long-term and positive results to society.

Due to the success and phenomenal positive impact of the first academy, ReGeneration decided to launch in 2021, the 2nd ReGeneration Academy for Food Innovation powered by New Agriculture - New Generation & ELBISCO. The program was supported through the founding donation of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation while a key supporter of the second Academy was

[Elbisco](#), with the certainty that it will add significant value to both the economy and society. Elbisco is a company that has been strategically focusing for years on continuous product innovation, aiming at the creation of high-quality food based on scientific research and meeting the evolving needs of consumers, in Greece and around the world.

Our beneficiaries were offered the opportunity to develop their expertise in food safety, the implementation of innovative processes and tools, such as packaging, and the digital transformation of agri-food businesses. The program was designed by renowned food industry experts and specialized scientists from Greek universities and Rutgers University in the USA. During the training, participants immersed themselves in topics such as global food system and trends, quality and food safety management, new product development, supply chain management, and national and European food and marketing legislation, while receiving an additional 32 hours of training on soft skills focused on personal and professional development.

### **Impact to date**

Thus far, ReGeneration has had tremendous impact and growth, accomplishing several significant flagship partnerships and milestone wins. To date, ReGeneration has facilitated 2600+ youth placements in the job market, with more than 925 companies collaborating, and more than 18.7 million euros paid in salaries. From these placements, 92% have had contract extensions beyond 6 months, compared to a 76% in 2014! The ReGeneration program has already offered 690.000 hours of soft and hard skills training – this number includes training courses offered via LinkedIn Learning and Coursera, as well as 270.000 hours of up/re-skilling via the ReGeneration Academy. Making sure to always give back to the community, our participants have also dedicated

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<sup>1</sup> Corporate Social Responsibility

18.000 hours of community service to selected NGOs.

### Future prospects

As we look forward to how we can maximize impact, given the shifting landscape, ReGeneration is expanding its focus to the Future of Work and learning as we believe that it will allow us to drive trailblazing development opportunities for both our beneficiaries and the country.

For 2022, ReGeneration's initiatives are designed around a belief in strategic ambidexterity as a focal point to enable our beneficiaries to thrive in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) economy. This means putting in place the skills required to optimize and grow traditional sectors such as retail, supply chain, energy, agriculture, hospitality, and shipping, while also preparing Greece's graduate workforce for the growth of new frontier verticals that are becoming increasingly relevant to the Greek economy, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, cloud computing, and cyber security.

**Maryli Pouli** is a graduate of the Department of Political Sciences of Concordia University Montreal and specialized in International Relations. After six years in Canada, she deepened her knowledge of Canadian law and International commercial relations with a certification from Vanier college. She's a Master's Science candidate in Geopolitical Analysis from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She has worked in the foreign policy sector and dealt with educational and technological development issues. Her main interest is in upcoming technological platforms that will revolutionize job markets and educational needs. She is now the Research & Innovations Lead at ReGeneration - Global Shapers Athens - and is in charge of the overall cross-sectoral innovation

strategy/action plan to develop new opportunities for young people.

**Vaso Polimerou** graduated from Panteion University in Economics and Development and has done her Erasmus at the Polish Naval Academy. A milestone in her professional career was the administrative position she held at Coca-Cola Hellas for three years before finding her call in Management and agile methodologies. Knowing ReGeneration from the very beginning, she is now a member of the dynamic Project Management Team - her objective is to bridge the gap between newly graduated youth and the labor market. In her free time, you will find her planning trips as she loves nature! In the summer, she never misses an opportunity to take her tent and discover hidden, enchanting beaches on the islands of Greece and indulge in her favorite hobby, photography.

**Angeliki Mitropoulou** is a restless Communication & DEI Specialist with an innate love for Project Management. She is the Founder of "KYMA Project -Inclusive dance" platform and Co-founder of the non-profit organization "Motivo" based in Athens. With her projects, she aspires to advocate for inclusion, diversity and belonging. Given her interdisciplinary background, she is passionate about "whole-being" an holistic approach to physical and mental wellbeing that drives creativity and productivity in the workplace and beyond. Scaling Grant awardee by the J.S.Latsis Public Benefit Foundation for outstanding SocioCultural Initiative, Member of the Bosch Alumni Network and Ashoka Changemakers alumna. At ReGeneration, she is part of ReGeneration's Project Management team and works her magic in communications and coordination, to ensure the program maintains sustainable growth.