



Strengthening the Quality Assurance and Evidence-Base of Lifelong Guidance

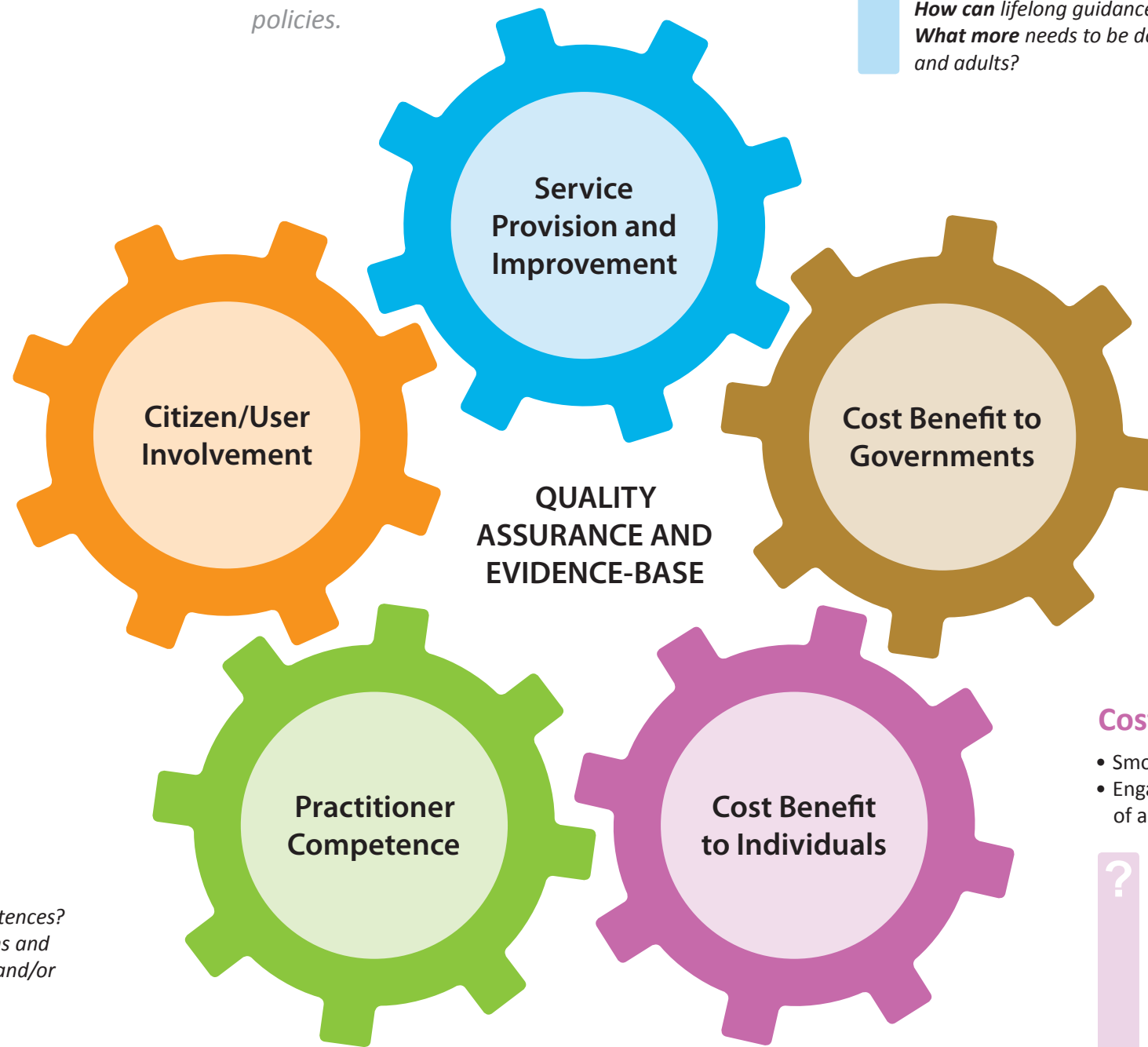
BRIEF SUMMARY



**EUROPEAN LIFELONG
GUIDANCE POLICY
NETWORK**

Strengthening the Quality Assurance and Evidence-Base of Lifelong Guidance

Using these five quality elements, a common language can be identified for continuous improvement of lifelong guidance systems and policies.



Citizen/User Involvement

- Improved user experience
- Development of effective and efficient services
- Strengthening accountability
- Contribution to social justice

KEY QUESTIONS:
What strategies and approaches can be used to engage more citizens in lifelong guidance and in the shaping of guidance services?
What role should government and other key actors perform in relation to citizen/user involvement in lifelong guidance?
What more needs to be done to focus on citizen/user involvement in lifelong guidance?

Practitioner Competence

- Assuring practitioner professionalism
- Ensuring access to services relevant to citizens' needs
- Supporting practitioners' continuous professional development

KEY QUESTIONS:
What evidence is available on practitioner competences?
What information is available on the qualifications and training of careers counsellors, guidance workers and/or work coaches?
What more needs to be done to improve quality assurance and the evidence-base in the area of practitioner competence?

Service Provision and Improvement

- Access to quality assured guidance as a public and private good
- Key policy imperatives: promotion and provision of career management skills, optimising channel mix (face-to-face, contact centres, distance services via internet, telephone & email), skills profiling and effective matching

KEY QUESTIONS:
What is needed to quality assure service provision and improvement?
How can lifelong guidance services be improved and how can its impact be assessed?
What more needs to be done to improve lifelong guidance services for young people and adults?

Cost Benefit to Governments

- Justification for expenditure of lifelong guidance services
- Need for analysis of immediate, medium and long-term calculated savings in terms of economic and social returns

KEY QUESTIONS:
What is the value-added proposition for Governments to invest in lifelong guidance?
How can impact assessment and cost benefits result in robust and useful quality-assurance and evidence-based policies and practices?
What are the policy challenges and likely future demands requiring new forms of cost-benefit analysis?

Cost Benefit to Individuals

- Smoother transitions
- Engagement and motivation to learn stemming from alignment of aspirations and personal development plans

KEY QUESTIONS:
What is the value-added proposition for individuals to invest in lifelong guidance?
How can policy makers and organisations that employ career counsellors, work coaches and guidance workers best communicate the added-value benefits of lifelong guidance for individuals?
What more needs to be done to develop and promote cost benefits and other added-value returns to individuals?



EUROPEAN LIFELONG GUIDANCE POLICY NETWORK (ELGPN) aims to assist the European Union Member States (and the neighbouring countries eligible for the Erasmus+ Programme) and the European Commission in developing European co-operation on lifelong guidance in both the education and the employment sectors. The purpose of the Network is to promote co-operation and systems development at member-country level in implementing the priorities identified in EU 2020 strategies and EU Resolutions on Lifelong Guidance (2004; 2008). The Network was established in 2007 by the Member States; the Commission has supported its activities under the Lifelong Learning Programme and the Erasmus+ Programme.

INVESTMENTS MADE IN lifelong guidance systems and services must demonstrate more clearly the added-value returns for individuals, communities and societies. The aim of an effective quality-assurance and evidence-based policy system is to improve efficiency in service provision, to increase financial accountability and to create transparency from the perspective of the citizen. This is a Brief Summary of the ELGPN Tool No. 5: Strengthening the Quality Assurance and Evidence-Base of Lifelong Guidance. Its aim is to stimulate stakeholder discussion and action for the continuous improvement of lifelong guidance policies and practices, focusing on strengthening quality assurance and evidence-based policy systems development.

Five key quality elements, criteria, indicators and examples of possible data have emerged from ELGPN reviews of national, EU and international quality assurance and evidence-base frameworks. These key quality elements include:

- Practitioner Competence;
- Citizen/User Involvement;
- Service Provision and Improvement;
- Cost Benefits to Governments; and
- Cost Benefits to Individuals.

Each of the five elements should not be considered solely in isolation but should be taken as a group i.e. the whole is greater than the sum of the individual parts.

By drawing upon these, it is possible to identify common language, to examine opportunities and challenges with a collective ambition for continuous improvement, in line with regional, national and European targets on education, employment, poverty and social exclusion.

This ELGPN Tool builds upon the work by the members of ELGPN in 2009–15, working in Work Package/Policy Review Cluster on Quality Assurance and Evidence-base with the support of consultants Dr Deirdre Hughes 2011–15 (UK) and Prof Peter Plant 2009–10 (Denmark) and lead country representatives Jennifer McKenzie 2013–15 (Ireland), Hélia Moura and Alexandra Figueiredo 2014–15 (Portugal), Dr Tibor Bors Borbély-Pecze 2011–12 (Hungary) and Steffen Jensen 2009–10 (Denmark) and partners of the ELGPN.

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The full version of this tool is available in print and online on the ELGPN website.

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