Lifelong Guidance Policies: Work in Progress

A report on the work of the European
Lifelong Guidance Policy Network 2008–10

EUROPEAN LIFELONG
GUIDANCE POLICY
NETWORK

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Foreword

Over the last decade increasing attention has been given to guidance at European and national levels. It is recognised as a crucial dimension of lifelong learning, promoting both social and economic goals: in particular, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of education, training and the labour market through its contribution to reducing drop-out, preventing skill mismatches and boosting productivity. Two EU Resolutions of the Education Council (2004, 2008) have highlighted the need for strong guidance services throughout the lifespan to equip people with the skills to manage their learning and careers and the transitions between and within education/ training and work. The Resolutions focused attention on four priority areas: the development of career management skills; accessibility of services; quality assurance; and co-ordination of services. Member States were invited to take action to modernise and strengthen their guidance systems.

The Commission, closely assisted by Cedefop and the European Training Foundation, has actively supported developments through commissioning studies, producing a handbook for policy makers jointly with the OECD, and promoting peer learning and the development of common reference tools with the support of a European expert group which met between 2002 and 2007. In 2007, the Member States decided to set up a European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). The Commission warmly welcomed this initiative as a commitment and means to take forward the concrete national implementation of the Resolution priorities. The Commission currently provides financial support to the ELGPN under the Lifelong Learning Programme and takes part in meetings of the network

I congratulate the ELGPN in what is has achieved during the first three years of its existence and thank our Finnish colleagues – Raimo Vuorinen and Lea Pöyliö – for the dynamic leadership they have shown in co-ordinating the network. This report presents the main results and demonstrates the added value of the network at national and European levels. The network has helped to reinforce co-operation and promote "joined-up" guidance services covering learning and work, and has inspired some countries lacking a forum to bring all stakeholders together to create one. For each of the four Resolution priority areas the findings of the collective work are presented and the main remaining challenges are identified.

The increased frequency of transitions citizens have to face over the course of their life, coupled with greater diversity and mobility in education/ training and the labour market, make effective life-long guidance systems more important than ever. The successor to the Lisbon strategy – *Europe 2020: A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth* – includes amongst its targets cutting early school leaving to 10% and ensuring that 40% of the younger generation has a tertiary degree. The strategy also highlights the need to: improve young people's entry into the labour market; promote the recognition of non-formal and informal learning; improve educational outcomes and enhance the openness and relevance of education systems; reinforce the attractiveness of VET; and ensure that citizens are able to acquire competences need to engage in further learning and the labour market from an early age and to develop them further throughout their life. Good-quality, accessible and co-ordinated guidance systems are crucial to achieving these goals, I therefore urge the ELGPN to continue with its valuable work and wish it every success.

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Executive summary

The European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) aims to assist the European Union Member States (and the neighbouring countries eligible for the Lifelong Learning Programme) and the European Commission in developing European co-operation on lifelong guidance in both the education and the employment sectors. Its purpose is to promote co-operation and systems development at Member State level in implementing the priorities identified in the EU Resolutions on Lifelong Guidance (2004; 2008). The network was established by the Member States; the Commission supports its activities under the Lifelong Learning Programme.

The ELGPN represents a major advance in supporting national lifelong guidance policy development in Europe. As a Member-State-driven network, it also represents an innovative form of the Open Method of Co-ordination within the European Union (EU), which could be applicable in other areas too.

The ELGPN was formally established in December 2007. During 2008 its activities focused mainly on establishing its structures and processes. The present report covers its activities under its first major work programme, in 2009–10.

Chapter 2 outlines the structure, processes and activities of the ELGPN. It describes its origins and evolution, the rationale for the 2009–10 work pro-gramme, and the ways in which it was implemented, linked to the policy drivers influencing it. It goes on to present the evaluation strategy adopted, and the key outcomes of the process, including implications for national policy developments. Finally, it indicates implications for future ELGPN work.

Chapter 3 reports the work of Work Package 1 on career management skills (CMS). The key points are:

- There is conceptual diversity among the participating countries concerning definition of CMS, but also convergence towards a common understanding of CMS, with some countries moving towards a more open conceptualisation and away from a narrow definition of career.
- CMS acquisition is an important outcome of education, embedded in the national curriculum in schools as well as in higher education settings, within a broader lifelong learning framework including the acquisition of CMS by adults within or outside the workforce. However, there is a need to define and promote a clear training strategy for those responsible for delivering CMS, especially teachers, vocational trainers and guidance practitioners.

- CMS should start from a strengths/abilities view of the individual, not a deficit view – this is particularly important in the context of catering for groups with special needs.

Chapter 4 reports the work of Work Package 2 on access. The key points are:

- Access is an issue of social justice and social inclusion policy. Career guidance has an important role in helping people make informed and careful choices about their opportunities; therefore, equity in access to career guidance is also a social justice issue. A key issue is whether career practitioners are responsible only for the users who come through their doors, or are responsible for all the citizens in our society who need help with career choices. A satisfactory balance of access and quality requires a better understanding of the effectiveness of different forms of career guidance in relation to their costs. The costs of delivering the interventions have a strong influence on citizens' access to the services they need.

- While ICT has been identified by most countries as highly important in the development and dissemination of careers information and services, it is also widely recognised that face-to-face services in the form of individual and/or group work are an essential part of guidance delivery. The new ICT tools have great potential for making access both more feasible and cheaper, creating innovative and flexible service delivery linked to self-access and self-help modes. On the other hand, the use of ICT should be seen as complementing rather than replacing the traditional forms of guidance. For those member countries intending to develop integrated services for people of all ages, this represents a new challenge, demanding a rethinking of institutional contexts and professional competences, and requiring a new mentality and culture based on co-ordination

and co-operation to make efficient use of scarce resources.

- The assessment of prior experiential learning (APEL) is an effective methodology for the development of employability. It is a process which enables people of all ages and backgrounds to receive recognition and formal credit for learning acquired in the past through non-formal and informal learning, and through work and other life experiences. Access to adequate guidance and support is necessary to help citizens, especially those with low skills or without employment, to make use of APEL and thereby to value their prior learning.

Chapter 5 reports the work of Work Package 3 on co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms. The key points are:

- Effective policies for lifelong guidance need to involve a number of different authorities and stakeholders. A national lifelong guidance forum is a mechanism for bringing these bodies together, in order to produce more effective policy development and more harmonised service provision. It may need to be complemented by regional and/or local forums.

- A forum or similar mechanism can operate at one or more of three levels: *communication* (which might include exchanging information, and exploring possibilities for co-operation and co-ordination); *co-operation* between partners, within existing structures (which might be largely informal in nature, and based on a co-operation agreement, with decision-making powers being retained by each partner; and *co-ordination* (which is likely to require a co-ordinating structure, with operational powers and funding – and possibly a contract or legal mandate).

- The establishment of a forum or similar mechanism is critical to enabling the other three themes of the 2008 Resolution – career

management skills, access, and quality and policy impact – to be addressed systemically at national level. It can also address the integrative potential of ICT for developing a coherent lifelong guidance system.

Chapter 6 reports the work of Work Package 4 on quality assurance and on developing an evidence base for policy and systems development. The key points are:

- In most European countries, guidance services are diverse and fragmented. Only a few countries have coherent guidance systems and commonly agreed quality standards for service delivery. The development of a comprehensive and cross-sectoral quality-assurance framework is however crucial to citizens seeking guidance, as well as to service providers and funding bodies (whether public or private).
- The development of such a framework needs to involve relevant authorities, stakeholders, guidance professionals, and users.
- The five common reference points for quality-assurance systems for guidance provision identified in the earlier work of the EU Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance (citizen and user involvement; practitioner competence; service improvement; coherence; and coverage of sectors) need to be supplemented by two further dimensions (outcome; impact) in the design of a Lifelong Guidance QA Framework. Numerical and indicator-based approaches need to be supplemented by other methods, e.g. interviews and narratives.
- As a first step, indicators on individual, educational, employment, and economic outcomes – along with wider societal outcomes – and the related databases should be identified and

developed, with a view to comparing such indicators across organisations and different types of service delivery, and ultimately across national borders. Further work on these indicators should be carried out during the next ELGPN work programme.

Chapter 7 reports the work of Task Group 1 on EU policy monitoring from a lifelong guidance perspective. It descibes the Open Method of Co-ordination, and the status of the various "soft law" instruments through which it is pursued. It then analyses the role of lifelong guidance in relation to the Lisbon strategy 2000–10 and the Europe 2020 post-Lisbon strategy, including the strategic framework for European co-operation in education and training. Finally, it explores how the work of ELGPN might in future be integrated more closely into EU policy developments, in relation both to education and training policies, and to employment and social inclusion policies.

Chapter 8 reports the work of Task Group 2 on synergies between EU-funded projects and their links to policy. It examines the main different forms which such projects take, and how they vary in terms of their level of transnationality, their main focus, and their relationship to guidance. It then explores the rationale for enhancing the synergies between projects and for increasing their impact on guidance policies and practices, applying these principles to some case-study projects. It concludes with recommendations for addressing these issues at various levels, including project commissioners (at EU and national levels), national guidance forums, Euroguidance centres, and project managers.

Chapter 9 outlines the current Common European Reference Tools for Lifelong Guidance, and indicates ways in which these might be revised and developed further in the next phase of the ELGPN's work.

Structure, processes and activities of the ELGPN[1]

2.1 Origins

The European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) represents a major development in support of national lifelong guidance policy development in Europe. As a Member-State-driven network, it also represents an innovative form of the Open Method of Co-ordination within the European Union (EU), which could be applicable in other areas too.

The origins of the Network can be traced to the historically significant meeting of the European Council held at Lisbon in March 2000. This outlined the European Union's aspiration to become "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society in the world" by the year 2010. Engagement in lifelong learning was acknowledged as one of the key ways through which this goal could be achieved, and the Commission's Communication on Lifelong Learning emphasised the key role of guidance in this respect.

The Communication included a recommendation that a European Guidance Forum be established. In the event, this was deferred, and instead the Commission established an Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance. This group operated from 2002 to 2007, and provided a focal point for a number of significant developments. In particular, it developed common reference tools for use by Member States on the aims and principles of lifelong guidance provision, criteria for assessing quality, and key features of a lifelong guidance system: these were designed to encourage convergence of guidance delivery systems. The reference tools were included in a policy handbook published jointly with OECD.[2]

The Expert Group also played an important role in fostering a Resolution of the EU Council of Education Ministers passed under the Irish Presidency in 2004.[3] This invited Member States to "seek to ensure effective co-operation and co-ordination between providers of guidance at national, regional and local levels in the provision of guidance services". The Resolution also invited Member States "to build on and adapt existing structures and activities (networks, work groups, programmes) related to the implementation of the resolution priorities".

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[1] This section is based on the key documents of the ELGPN work programme 2009–10 and has been drafted by Dr Raimo Vuorinen with support from Professor Anthony G. Watts.

[2] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development & European Commission (2004). *Career Guidance: a Handbook for Policy Makers*. Paris: OECD.

[3] http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/resolution2004_en.pdf

The Expert Group did much valuable work. Its chief weakness, however, was that it was not representative of the Member States, and therefore had difficulties in translating its efforts into effective action at Member State level. Accordingly, at the end of 2005, the Commission initiated a discussion with its Expert Group for Lifelong Guidance on a suitable mechanism to support EU lifelong guidance policy implementation at national level, involving relevant ministries and other bodies responsible for education and labour force issues. This led to a major discussion in the broader forum of the Finnish EU Presidency Conference on "Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems: Building the Stepping Stones", held in Jyväskylä, Finland, in November 2006.

2.2 Evolution

The workshop conclusions from the Jyväskylä conference stressed the fragility of lifelong guidance policies at national level, and called for a strong and stable mechanism at European level to encourage more sustainable development at national level and to support both policy development and implementation. The Commission indicated that it was willing to continue to assist this process, with the help of Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Education and Training), and could also offer financial support under the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007–13.

An inaugural meeting to establish the network took place on 7–8 May 2007 in Helsinki. Delegations from the Member States were invited to clarify their expectations and intentions regarding the network. A total of 23 countries attended the meeting, together with representatives from the Commission, the European Forum for Student Guidance (FEDORA), the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG), the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy (ICCDPP) and the European Social Partners. The participating countries agreed to the establishment of a European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) and agreed to participate in the network as members or observers, subject to written confirmation. The European and international bodies present expressed their willingness to continue their support for and involvement in the process. Later both Cedefop and ETF indicated their willingness to co-operate with the new network. The ELGPN was finally established by a contract between the Network Co-ordinator and the Commission's DG EAC in December 2007. During the initial phase 2007–08 there were 28 member countries and one observer in the network. At the end of this phase, the Network was given a significant role by the French Presidency in a conference on lifelong guidance held in Lyon and in the preparation of the 2008 EU Council Resolution on lifelong guidance (see Section 2.3).

During its two first phases (2007–10), the ELGPN has been co-ordinated by a team from Finland. The Finnish Ministry of Education and the Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy designated the co-ordination task to the Finnish Institute for Educational Research at the University of Jyväskylä. This unit convenes the network and supports the implementation of its initiatives. The ELGPN members appoint a Steering Group with six members to ensure effective management of the network and to support the Co-ordinator in defining the priorities and budget allocation within the work programme. ELGPN liaises closely with the European Commission and with Cedefop and the European Training Foundation (ETF). It also calls upon the support of contracted experts.

2.3 Rationale and implementation of the 2009–10 work programme

The ultimate aim of the ELGPN is to provide added value to the participating countries for the development and implementation of their lifelong guidance policies, systems and services. This added value might include:

- Sharing of ideas on common problems.
- Opportunity to test ideas and showcase good practice.
- When introducing new programmes and services, learning from relevant practice elsewhere, with the cost-benefits this may involve.

This should benefit users, providers and stakeholders. A further added value is improved co-operation in lifelong guidance policy development between the Member States, the European Commission and relevant bodies or networks at national, European and international levels. At national level, the ELGPN also promotes sharing of practice in the development of national co-ordination mechanisms.

Membership of the Network is open to all countries eligible for assistance under the European Union Lifelong Learning Programme 2007–13. During 2009–10 the ELGPN has consisted of 26 member countries (AT, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IS, IT, LV, LT, LU, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, SE, SK, Sl, TR, UK), with 4 additional countries as observers (BE, BG, IR, RO).

The participating countries designate their representatives in the network. The working assumptions are that each national delegation will include both governmental and non-governmental representatives. During the second phase of the ELGPN, the member countries have adopted different strategies for involving different ministries without taking up too many places. Almost all countries include representation of the education ministry; some include representation of the ministry of labour/employment; some also include NGOs (see Annex 1). Through appropriate liaison arrangements, the network ensures regular contact with other relevant bodies or networks at national, European and international levels.

Because EU Member States are responsible for their own lifelong guidance policies and systems, the ELGPN promotes lifelong guidance particularly through the Open Method of Co-ordination. The network members jointly identify and define the objectives to be achieved, with the Council Resolutions 2004 and 2008 and other EU policy documents as a basis. The members stimulate innovation and convergence through peer learning and exchange of best practices.

The mandate of the ELGPN was formally endorsed in the 2008 EU Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies. This Resolution invited the Member States and the Commission, within their respective competences, to strengthen European co-operation on lifelong guidance, in particular through the ELGPN, with the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme, and in liaison with Cedefop.

During the subsequent second phase, four Plenary Meetings have been held (Luxembourg, March 2009; Riga, Latvia, September 2009; Zaragoza, Spain, May 2010; Lisbon, Portugal, September 2010), alongside more regular Steering Group meetings.

Both the ELGPN Steering Group and the whole-network Plenary Meeting agreed that the work programme for 2009–10 should be built around the four themes identified in the 2008 Resolution. These were framed as four thematic activities:

- Career management skills.
- Access, including accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL).
- Co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms in guidance policy and systems development.
- Quality assurance and evidence base for policy and systems development.

The relationship between these four themes is outlined in Figure 1. In brief, WP3 (co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms) addresses the policy process; WP2 (access) and WP4 (quality) examine two key cross-sectoral policy issues; WP1 (career management skills) addresses the sought citizen outcomes; and the other part of WP4 (impact measures) addresses the sought policy outcomes.
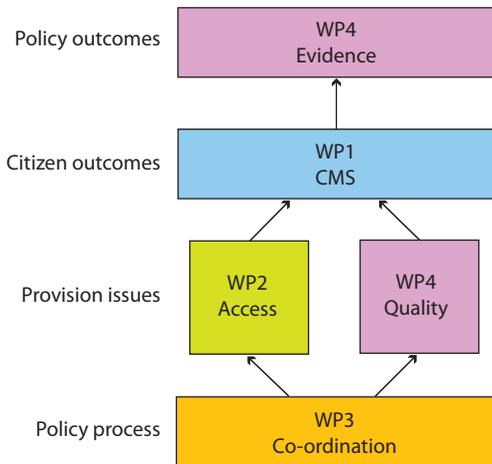
Figure 1: *Model indicating the relationship between the Work Packages*

These four thematic activities have been implemented through a consistent process. Each has had a maximum of 10–12 participating countries, plus a lead country and a contracted expert to co-ordinate and support the activity in co-operation with the ELGPN Co-ordinator. In each case, the programme included two separate thematic field visits and a third synthesis meeting.

Each ELGPN national representative was asked to reflect in advance on how each of the themes in which they were participating could enhance the development of their national policies and practices, and to identify their expectations and aspirations for the theme. In addition, the field visits provided opportunities for the host countries to influence their own policies and practices, and to involve key policymakers within these processes. To balance these two elements, a structure was developed with the following features:

- Field visits were hosted by countries which wanted to use the support of other EU countries to assist their national guidance policy development. The field visit programme was designed in co-operation with the host country. In several cases the host country invited additional national representatives to part of the meeting, or organised a larger national policy seminar or conference either immediately prior to or immediately after the field visit, in which the ELGPN members could take part as "visiting experts" or interested observers. Countries which did this included Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Poland, Portugal and Spain.

- The programme also took account of the common/shared interests of the participating ELGPN members, with part of the working time being allocated to mutual learning and to Work Package "business". A Briefing Note prepared in advance of the meeting by the expert attached to the relevant Work Package was designed to provide a basis for this discussion.

- Each field visit reflected the broad ELGPN goals linked to the theme and resulted in a Reflection Note on the mutual learning gained during the field visit. The attached expert was commissioned to prepare this Reflection Note, which was subsequently placed on the ELGPN website so that it could be shared with the whole network and with a wider audience.

In addition, the ELGPN 2009–10 work programme included two thematic Task Groups. Task Group 1 examined European education & training and employment policies from a lifelong guidance perspective and produced Policy Briefings related to the four Work Package themes as identified in the 2008 Resolution, as well a commentary on the role of lifelong guidance in relation to the current economic crisis. Task Group 2 examined the synergy between EU-funded projects and their links with lifelong guidance policies. Both of the Task Groups were supported by contracted experts.

Annex 2 provides an overview of the participation of each member country in the thematic activities; Annex 3 lists the locations and dates of the field visits for each of the activities. The subsequent chapters of this report identify the key lessons learned during the process for use by the ELGPN member countries in

enhancing their lifelong guidance practice and policy development.

2.4   Key policy drivers

The ELGPN 2009–10 work programme was strongly based on the 2008 Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies. In addition, in the implementation of the work programme, efforts were made through Task Group 1 to reflect the role of lifelong guidance in relation to other key policy drivers, linked in particular to the EU's response to the emerging economic crisis. The role of lifelong guidance in supporting lifelong learning, workforce upskilling and transition management is highly relevant both to the short-term Recovery Plan and to medium/long-term strategies.

The EU has recently been revising the key policy drivers in education and labour market policies. The Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European co-operation in education and training (ET 2020)[4] identified the role of lifelong guidance in its objective 1 ("Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality"). The "New Skills for New Jobs"[5] as a joint initiative of DG EAC and the DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities provides a more structured opportunity for the Member States to examine what lifelong guidance can do in support of matching skills and jobs from both individual and labour market perspectives.

Task Group 1 promoted awareness of these new interfaces. They are elaborated in more detail in Chapter 8.

2.5   Evaluation strategy

The goal of the evaluation of the ELPGN in 2009–10 was to support the quality and effectiveness of the

Network by providing formative feedback about the work that was done and summative information on the results that were produced. To achieve this, data were collected from two main sources. For the formative evaluation, the participants from the different countries and other participating organisations were asked after each of the main meetings, including the Work Package meetings, to appraise (a) how the work was going and (b) what was being achieved in relation to prior expectations and in terms of impact at national (and European) level. The evaluation covered the following aspects:

- Communication (Process).
- Organisational aspects and leadership/co-ordination (Process).
- Networking/co-operation (Process).
- General outcomes (Output).
- Outcomes and impact at national level (Output).

The results were then fed back so that they could be used in planning future activities.

For the summative evaluation, the Steering Group defined indicators (based on the defined goals of the network) and measures which member countries (each operating as a team) could use to estimate the network's outcomes and impact. The responses to the online summative evaluation questionnaires were completed by national teams in May 2010.

In general, the participants were very satisfied with the overall communication processes in the network. They felt that the clarity of the tasks and working methods as well as the leadership within the 2009-10 work programme were good. Improvements were needed in meeting the agreed time schedules and in the financial arrangements. Most of the members were especially satisfied with the opportunities to participate in the activities, as well the principles of equity and respect among the network members. The outcomes were perceived to be in accordance with the agreed work programme.

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4   http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc1120_en.htm

5   http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=568&langId=en

In all the thematic activities, the participants were satisfied with the quality of the outcomes. In the case of WP4 (quality assurance and impact evidence) the participants were a little more likely to indicate that the work had not fully met their expectations, but here too the results were predominantly positive. All members were satisfied with the reflection notes and synthesis reports of the work packages.

A more detailed report on the evaluation of the ELGPN's activities 2009–10 is available on the ELGPN website.

2.6 Key outcomes

The main aim during the initial phase (2008) was to establish the network infrastructure and through peer learning activities to identify in more detail the areas of guidance where national developments could be enhanced through the ELGPN. During the second phase (2009–10), most ELGPN members agreed that the goals for establishing the infrastructure and communication procedures within the network had been met to a large extent and that the ELGPN had been able to identify relevant national contact points in most of the eligible countries. However, there were some European countries which did not yet participate fully in the network, and the composition of the national team did not always include representatives from more than one ministerial sector.

The ELGPN website (http://elgpn.eu) acts as a document repository, including links to the main background documents. The website is structured according to the EU Council Resolution priorities; it supports the management of the network and includes information on the ELGPN national contact points. It also includes a database which enables members to share and disseminate experiences on interesting national initiatives or projects related to lifelong guidance policy development. The format for these national examples is based on the European Commission's Knowledge System for Lifelong Learning (KSLLL) (http://www.kslll.net). This enables them to be published in the KSLLL as well as on the ELGPN website.

The ELGPN members have gradually started to use the website in more interactive ways in relation to the thematic activities. The substantive work undertaken between the Plenary Meetings and the Steering Group meetings has been supported on occasion with online videoconferencing tools.

The structure of the ELGPN work programme 2009-10 in accordance with the 2008 EU Council priorities has provided members with a consistent frame within which to review their progress on the implementation of these priorities. This report is one outcome of the ELGPN and acts as a qualitative evaluation of the development of lifelong guidance policies in the member countries. The responses of the ELGPN members indicate some clear examples of the catalytic impact and added value of the ELGPN at national level.

A general outcome among the ELGPN members appears to be a better understanding of their own national guidance system, as well as of guidance practices and systems in other European countries. This has provided valuable ideas and inspiration for further development of national guidance systems.

In relation to the definition and promotion of career management skills (CMS) (Work Package 1), despite awareness of the varied cultural contexts and curricular traditions, the participants were able to agree a common definition of lifelong CMS. The interfaces between core lifelong learning competences and career management competences helped this process. The results of the ELGPN discussions will support a stronger implementation at national level of curricular and other processes designed to support the development of CMS.

Work Package 2 on access examined different models of service delivery and the balance between differentiated service delivery and social equity. The participants examined the potential of new technology in delivering guidance services through various channels. Sharing of experience helped a number of countries in developing new distance guidance ser-

vices, including telephone-based services and inter-active internet-based services.

Most ELGPN members indicated that the co-oper-ation between different ministries responsible for guidance services was supported by their involve-ment in the work of the ELGPN. The work of exist-ing national forums was enhanced by their role in relation to the network. In several countries, involve-ment in Work Package 3, and the access this pro-vided to the experiences of other countries, helped to inspire the establishment of new national forums or other co-ordination mechanisms.

The fourth EGLPN thematic activity (WP4) on quality assurance and evidence in guidance proved to be a challenging task. Participation in the ELGPN increased understanding of the significance of qual-ity indicators, and indicated possible strategies for developing and implementing them, alongside ways of developing improved evidence on the impact of guidance services. A number of countries reported encouraging developments and progress in these respects.

In line with the principles of the Open Method of Co-ordination, the member countries have been able to use the outcomes of the ELGPN in accordance with their own priorities. Several member countries translated and disseminated ELGPN reflection notes and related materials so that they could be utilised at national level.

The catalytic role of the ELGPN was particu-larly evident during the national seminars which were arranged in conjunction with network Ple-nary Meetings or Work Package field visits. These events provided opportunities for policy makers and stakeholders to be updated on international devel-opments, as well as allowed the host countries to showcase their national policies and practices.

It was clear that in several countries strategic use had been made of the European Social Fund in supporting the development of national guidance systems. The work of Task Group 2 enabled experi-ence to be shared of such examples, and also of the potential impact of collaborative transnational

projects. Recommendations were produced on how the synergies between such projects and their policy impact might be enhanced in future.

A further issue discussed within several field visits was the role of legislation in the implementation of lifelong guidance policies. New legislation in France and Iceland provided strong examples of legislation designed to assure citizens' access to high-quality services.

In general, the ELGPN has facilitated a process of mutual learning among European countries and the sharing of good ideas and good practices. In the Work Packages, in particular, the peer learning events and the field visits have contributed to mutual inspiration between the member countries. Focused discussions and reflections have provided insights into the contemporary practices and underlying prin-ciples of the different traditions in the member states. The ELGPN has also helped to convince national policy makers that "European guidance policy" is not some abstract metaphorical construct by show-ing concrete examples of policies and practices from other member countries.

The main added value of the ELGPN (see Annex 9) seems to be the inspiration gained from the progress of other countries, the co-operation developed on guidance policies and practices (policy sharing), and the support for the identification of gaps in lifelong guidance policy development and for policy imple-mentation at national level. A particularly strong impact has been its support for the development of national forums or other co-ordination mecha-nisms. ELGPN also has an impact as a knowledge base on European policy development, where shar-ing of similar challenges can be applied to differing national contexts.

2.7 Implications for future ELGPN work

The next phase of the ELGPN work programme (2011–12) is designed to build on the experience and development of the first phase and to improve

the internal efficiency of the work of the ELGPN itself. Its precise objectives will be agreed with the Commission when funding is sought, but at this stage it is envisaged to focus on:

- Broadening the base of involvement of all Member States in the four priority areas.
- Increasing national awareness of ELGPN knowledge and experience based on these four priorities.
- Deepening the work on the four priorities through additional peer learning, particularly with national and EU outcomes for each in mind.
- Strengthening the policy links/interface between the work of ELGPN and EU policy development for schools, VET, higher education, adult education, employment and social inclusion.
- Providing national policy-makers, developers and stakeholders with concrete supports to assist them in their national and EU policy development.
- Extending the dissemination of the ELGPN's work.
- Strengthening the ELGPN's links with relevant international organisations.

A key objective will be to develop operational tools to support concrete policy implementation (see Section 9). This will include updating the 2004 OECD/EU handbook for policy makers, and drawing upon elements of the existing EU common reference tools. The new tools should be piloted at national level in a small number of countries interested in conducting a holistic review of their national guidance system based on a peer-learning process.

2.8   Conclusions

The establishment of the ELGPN was an initiative by the EU Member-States through the Open Method of Co-ordination. It is seen as a mechanism to promote co-operation at member-country level on lifelong guidance and to support the establishment of national/regional co-ordination structures covering the education and employment sectors. The ELGPN has also created an interface with parallel international collaborative projects on policy issues of mutual interest, notably the biennial International Symposia on Career Development and Public Policy, thereby facilitating and promoting worldwide exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise in the field of policy and systems development.

The added value of the Network is related to the fact that in the European Union the Member States face broadly similar challenges and problems. The ELGPN is a tool for policy-makers, practitioners and researchers to work together and share examples of good practice. It can thereby help to enhance national solutions to national problems. The goal is to help the Member States and other participating countries to develop better-informed and more effective policies related to lifelong guidance.

From a wider EU policy perspective, the creation of the ELGPN helps policy-makers to meet the challenges they face in enhancing national reforms through implementing the Lisbon strategy and the EU 2020 strategy, as well as the tools supporting the strategy (including the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)). The added value of the ELGPN is not directly visible to citizens, but benefits them through its impact on how national lifelong guidance systems are developed.

The ELGPN promotes placing the citizen/user at the centre for lifelong guidance policies, including the articulation of the user voice and the guidance practitioner voice, and the role of civil society in policy development. This reflects an approach to guidance policies and guidance practices that aims to build on the resources of the users of guidance; to engage them actively in the guidance process; and to facilitate their inputs to the planning of guidance

activities and methods, so that they are viewed as co-owners and co-designers of guidance provision. In these respects, it is an agenda of empowerment and democratisation.

The key strength of the ELGPN is the strong ownership of its activities expressed by the national delegations. There has been good progress in developing a common understanding of how to contribute to both national and EU-level lifelong guidance policy development. In future, there could be scope for more "vision-building" about a European perspective on guidance, with more explicit specifications of policy objectives.

Career management skills (WP1)[6]

3.1 Context and rationale[7]

The career guidance reviews carried out by the OECD, the World Bank, and a range of EU agencies (i.e. the European Training Foundation, Cedefop, and the DG Employment, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities), have all underlined the need for citizens to be well equipped with skills to manage the complex and non-linear transitions that mark contemporary education, training and working pathways. A common thread in all these reviews is the conviction that today, individuals are likely to face a certain degree of insecurity as they navigate occupational options, opportunities and setbacks throughout their life, and can expect to change or lose employment with a greater degree of frequency than before. Because of this, their engagement with formal learning, training and re-training is likely to last well into adulthood, in response to rapid changes in technology, markets, and related employment opportunities.

Some of the arguments used to highlight the need for lifelong learning may be challenged by the way the modern economy uses – or fails to use – skills. Indeed, a range of industrial sectors not only retain but generate low-knowledge, low-skill, neo-Taylorised jobs simultaneously with knowledge-rich jobs. As the experience of many countries have shown, investment in education and training can increase exponentially, but this does not necessarily translate into improved employment prospects, or into significantly higher percentages of new entrants into the labour market becoming knowledge workers. The prevalence of graduate underemployment, with educational and training attainments exceeding job requirements, suggests that a 'knowledge society' does not necessarily lead to a 'knowledge-based economy'. Despite this, there are clear signs that the notion of 'career' as a one-time 'choice' and a lifelong channel for one's economic pursuits is being supplanted by the notion that individuals need to actively construct 'portfolio', 'boundaryless' careers as well as career identities (in employment or self-employment) in ways that are open-ended and flexible, in response to the changing vicissitudes

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[6]   This chapter is a team effort of the ELGPN Work Package 1 on Promoting career management skills. The text has been prepared by Professor Ronald G. Sultana, based on the contributions and reflections from the participating countries: AT, CZ DK, FR, IT, LT, LU, MT, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK. Mr. Jasmin Muhic from the Czech Republic supported the process as the WP1 lead-country representative.

[7]   Given the nature of this synthesis report, no references are provided. Readers interested in deepening their understanding of the issues discussed, as well as in reading further about the themes raised, are referred to the two Reflection Notes produced after the Work Package peer learning events. See also R.G. Sultana (2010) 'Learning career management skills in Europe: a critical review', *Journal of Education and Work* (forthcoming), which provides a bibliography of the relevant literature.

of life. Such representations of 'self' and 'career' may be more applicable to the knowledge-rich sectors of the economy, given the fast pace of change there. Efforts on the part of EU Member States to transform themselves into knowledge-based economies suggest, however, that the skills required in managing one's education, training, and career transitions are likely to become more and more useful, and necessary.

The awareness of the increasing need for such Career Management Skills (CMS) has become evident in a number of ways. At a pan-European level, the EU Council of Ministers of Education has promulgated Resolutions which give special attention to career guidance, highlighting the way such a service can support the acquisition of the skills required to successfully manage one's transitions throughout life (Council of the European Union 2004, 2008). At national levels, and across a whole range of institutions that include education, training, community and employment settings, one can note several initiatives which attempt to develop CMS in individuals and groups (see Case Study 1 for an example of such initiatives). While the teaching of such skills is certainly not new, there seem to be two linked rationales that have intensified interest in CMS:

- There is, first of all, a greater awareness of the need to introduce or strengthen CMS in response to the need for skills in managing one's non-linear career pathways. Some countries have clearly articulated their vision for CMS in relation to the changing world of work, aiming for a skills strategy that encourages competitiveness. This is the case with UK-Scotland's 'Curriculum for Excellence' initiative, as well as Austria's 'key2success' strategy, for instance – not to mention the fact that CMS features as a core element in Austria's national LLG strategy. France and the Netherlands too have mapped a series of CMS in relation to the European Reference Framework of Key Competences for Lifelong Learning.[8] Germany has introduced several publicly-funded initiatives to support

CMS for young persons in the period of transition from school to training or work (Berufsorientierung/Berufsvorbereitung), while Sweden has published a new steering document which helps schools identify some of the key school-to-work teaching areas that need to be covered.

- There is also a conviction that such skills increase employability, thus promoting social equity and inclusion. At school level, curricula have been or are being developed in order to help young people become more adept at planning and managing their transitions between education, training, and employment. The Czech Republic, for instance, has recently integrated work-related thematic areas into existing subject matter in the curriculum, while Austria, Lithuania, Malta and the Netherlands, to mention only four other examples, report an increasing emphasis being placed on preparing young people for the world of work. Hungary has developed a career skills curriculum for students in Grades 1 to 12 (age 6 to 18). CMS are also promoted with unemployed people, with many Public Employment Services delivering or outsourcing innovative programmes that build employability skills in adults, with a view to increasing their chances of integration in a tight labour market. In Portugal, for instance, as in many other EU Member States, a great deal of work has been done to support the unemployed in developing self-esteem, in building up personal and social skills, in acquiring an entrepreneurial spirit, and in learning job-seeking skills. Norway too has developed regional partnerships in which the county administration works closely with the

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[8] These key competences include: communication in mother tongue; communication in a foreign language; math, science and technological literacy; digital competence; learning-to-learn; interpersonal and civic competences; entrepreneurship; and cultural expression. See European Communities (2007). *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning: European Reference Framework.* Luxembourg: Office for Official Publication of the European Communities. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/ll-learning/keycomp_en.pdf (accessed 21 June 2010).

PES and social partners to promote CMS. In Poland, as in most if not all EU Member States, PES staff support service users in drawing up Individual Action Plans, which involve a range of CMS.

While the rationale behind emphasising CMS appears, at face value, to be sound, it is nevertheless worth highlighting the fact that the tightening of the bonds between education and employment is in tension with the decreasing opportunities for employment – and especially for 'decent work'. There is a danger in this, in that while the intention behind the development of CMS can indeed be to increase employability and to enhance equity and social inclusion, the unintended sub-text could be that those who end up out of work have only (or mainly) themselves to blame. This trend towards 'responsibilisation' and 'individualisation' of social issues (also vehicled by such terms as 'career resilience' and 'career agility') alerts us to the process of 'insourcing', i.e. a reallocation of functions, activities and responsibilities to the individual that were previously regarded as primarily the responsibility of institutions and collectives. Such a trend is particularly worrisome since it is taking place at a time when notions of social solidarity are being weakened. 'Negative globalization' has simultaneously reduced the power of the state, and provided it with complex, often bewildering challenges that it is ill-equipped to handle through the legal and institutional instruments that have been developed throughout its 200-year-old history. The state finds itself unable to offer security to its citizens, and obliged to call for more 'flexibility' in the labour market and in all other areas of life regulated by market forces. This means even more insecurity, and an increase in risk. CMS, unless critically approached, can easily become yet another way by means of which the state reframes its deficit by projecting it as personal failing, with the victim blamed for problems that are structural in nature.

3.2 CMS content and modalities of programme delivery

While, at pan-European level, the term 'CMS' is now widely employed, at Member State levels other terms are used to refer to a similar set of skills. These include 'lifeskills', 'personal and social education', 'transition skills', 'school-to-work curricula', 'career education', 'career learning', 'career development learning', and so on. While there are overlaps in the meaning of the semantic fields associated with each word or phrase, it is important to note that 'CMS' is a particularly Anglo-Saxon term, and not readily understood in a range of Member State contexts where English is not commonly used. Furthermore, even in Anglo-Saxon contexts, the term 'CMS' has different connotations, given that it started being first used in the HRD field in order to refer more narrowly to vertical and horizontal mobility *within* a particular job rather than to transitions *between* a range of education, training, employment and self-employment settings.

Given the contestations over meaning and relevance of concepts embedded in notions of CMS, it is important to define the way the term is being used in this context, in ways that can identify the content of a CMS programme. One definition which seems to capture the agenda behind CMS is the following: "Career management skills refer to a whole range of competences which provide structured ways for individuals and groups to gather, analyse, synthesise and organise self, educational and occupational information, as well as the skills to make and implement decisions and transitions."

Within such a definition, and despite the different terms used across a range of Member States, one can identify a high degree of shared understanding across Europe of what constitutes CMS content or a CMS curriculum. Most of the CMS-related programmes taught within schools and in PES contexts across Europe cover themes that easily fall within the DOTS framework – i.e. they involve learning competences that support Decision-learning, Opportunity awareness, Transition learning, and Self-awareness.

They also overlap with the themes which appear in the National Career Development Guidelines developed in the US in 1989, and later in the Canadian and Australian Blueprints.[9] The Canadian Blueprint, for instance, organises CMS around three main categories, namely 'personal management', 'exploring learning and work', and 'life/work building'.

While there is a broad agreement on what themes should/could feature in CMS programmes, there are a number of issues that deserve to be highlighted. Some of these issues signal a number of tensions that also need to be addressed:

- There is a core of themes that is broadly applicable to – and useful for – all citizens, irrespective of their age or circumstance. However, there are arguments to be made regarding the level at which these different themes are addressed, depending on the age and educational level of the persons to whom the programmes are addressed. Both the Canadian and Australian Blueprints adopt such an approach, for instance.

- Another set of arguments can be made in terms of identifying specific CMS that are more appropriate or more necessary for a range of target groups, including those who, in policy terms, are defined as 'vulnerable' or 'at risk'. Some approaches to CMS are therefore keen to identify career development learning targets for specific groups of citizens, such as persons with disability, as well as the long-term unemployed, Roma/travelling people, immigrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, ex-inmates, fostered children, young offenders, victims of family violence, the homeless, those suffering from substance abuse, and senior workers. There would of course be a great deal of overlap with a range of career management skills taught in 'mainstream' programmes, but more targeted attention would

here be given to challenges that specific categories of citizens face.

- Despite the reference to 'career' in the term 'CMS', several countries interpret the remit of this area as going beyond work-related aspects of a person's development. Broader terms such as 'lifeskills' or 'personal and social education' (PSE) more explicitly encourage a more life-wide approach which includes, but is not restricted, to employment – though of course, the term 'career' is also commonly used in English to apply to wider forms of work, and includes learning too. As Austria, Finland and Lithuania note, adopting the more generic terms could be strategically wiser because these make the target competences 'more visible' to students and parents alike, since they are easier to understand: for some citizens/learners, notions of 'career' and 'career management' might appear alien or incongruent with the manner in which life pathways are considered and constructed. There are, however, some dangers in adopting a CMS curriculum that is too broad and inclusive. As some Member State experiences show, career-related issues can, over time, be given less importance and are even elbowed out of the PSE curriculum in schools. For a number of reasons – not least because psycho-social problems among students are perceived to be on the increase – many PSE teachers will tend to privilege the personal dimensions in the PSE curriculum, rather than the themes linked to career development issues.

- While the emphasis on CMS appears to be somewhat new, one must not assume that the novelty of the term for some countries is equated with novelty in curricular practice. Most if not all countries have some experience in teaching aspects of the skills which are now associated with CMS. Furthermore, one should not forget that CMS are often an outcome of the regular curriculum. Several school subjects,

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9   See http://206.191.51.163/blueprint/whatis.cfm for information about the Canadian Blueprint. Information about the Australian Blueprint for Career Development is available at http://www.blueprint.edu.au/

for instance, teach students about the world of work, and develop broader life skills that contribute to one's interaction with employment and self-employment. Indeed, some curricular traditions – such as the Austrian one – are underpinned by the conviction that education cannot teach competences as much as it can provide rich, varied and pedagogically appropriate experiences and environments that facilitate their development. The issue of diverse curricular traditions is important, and alerts us to the problems of adopting a 'one-size fits all' approach across Member States, or of 'importing' wholesale ready-made frameworks from elsewhere. Lithuania, for instance, ran into difficulties when it tried to implement the Canadian Blueprint, which was found to be underpinned by a different philosophical approach to education, learning, and the curriculum (see Case Study 2).

- The current emphasis on CMS should not lead to the assumption that young people and adults do not already have a range of career management skills, which they may have learned through socialisation in family contexts, and through their contribution to community-based activities such as youth clubs, sports associations, and through participation in the labour market through part-time or full-time employment, holiday and seasonal work, and entrepreneurial initiatives.

- All this also raises issues as to how to integrate CMS in an educational context, i.e. whether to have it as a separate, timetabled 'subject', to have CMS (or at least aspects of it) infused throughout the curriculum (e.g. as a horizontal theme, as is the case with the introduction of 'personal financial management' in the Czech Republic, or of 'lifelong learning and career planning' in Estonia), to offer CMS as a extra-curricular activity (e.g. through workshop-type sessions at key transition and decision-making points), or through a judicious mixture of two

or more of these strategies. Decisions about which of these options to choose depends on a number of factors, such as curricular traditions within a country, concerns about an overloaded curriculum, trends in cross-curricular collaboration among teachers, and so on. These are not only Member-State-specific, but also sector-specific: it might be easier, for instance, to have teacher team work in delivering CMS at primary and lower secondary levels than at higher levels of the education system, where the boundaries between specific subjects become more tightly drawn. An interesting example of how teachers can work together to ensure coverage of key CMS is provided by Austria (see Case Study 3).

- Within the context of Public Employment Services (PES), CMS programmes are often delivered as a set of activities within 'job clubs', for instance, where the unemployed learn a range of skills that increase their employability, such as job-hunting strategies, self-presentation skills, c.v. writing, and so on. Most of these programmes are limited in duration, offered in-house or out-sourced to private providers, and are short-term in orientation, seeking to place individuals into jobs as quickly as possible rather than supporting more long-term goals such as career development. Several PES across Europe also deliver aspects of CMS programmes in targeted ways with specific groups of at risk citizens, tailoring a broad approach to the more particular needs of vulnerable groups. In achieving this, they are often supported by community-based organisations that are closer to the client groups and thus in a better position to provide tailored services.

3.3 Curricular principles underpinning CMS

All curricula are fundamentally selections that are made from a wide body of knowledge that is avail-

able. These selections tell us a lot about what a particular society values, and what it gives priority to. They also tell us a lot about which groups wield enough power to negotiate and include what they consider to be valuable, worthwhile knowledge, and whether access to such knowledge should be open or restricted, and if so, to which groups. The inevitably political nature of curricula – whether they are delivered formally or informally, whether in schools or other learning contexts – is also shaped by 'national' definitions of the educational project. We in fact note across Europe a range of curricular traditions – including the 'encyclopaedic', the 'humanist', the 'pastoral', and the 'outcome-based' – that have been defined throughout a historical process of nation-state formation, and which is one of the main reasons why the EU has tended to eschew any attempt at harmonisation in matters educational.

Despite the context-specific nature of curricula, many curriculum projects are inspired by a very similar set of principles, which reflect political orientations and values, as well as to specific understandings of what it means to teach and to learn. In UK-Scotland, for instance, the 'Curriculum for Excellence' is underpinned by a commitment to 'challenge and enjoyment', 'breadth', 'progression', 'depth', 'personalisation and choice', 'coherence', and 'relevance'. All these principles resonate with efforts in curriculum construction in several countries within and beyond Europe.

Some of these broad curricular principles deserve further elaboration given their particular relevance to CMS. These principles are here represented as imperatives that serve to shape learning programmes in particular ways, and the inter-linkage between them and the congruence and continuity in value-orientation should be quite evident.

- CMS curricula should empower citizens. One way this can take place is through ensuring that CMS do not focus on presumed individual deficits, but rather acknowledge that individual achievement (including employment) is strongly defined by the strength or otherwise of the economic environment. In real terms, this distinction is evident in CMS curricula that stress 'learning *for* work' (where individuals have to learn coping skills to adapt to a situation), and 'learning *about* work', where the focus is on a critical understanding of oneself in context. Austria, Denmark, Finland and France – among others – seem to favour the latter approach, though it would be probably true to say that, in the implementation of CMS programmes, both orientations are used and not necessarily seen as mutually exclusive, with the emphasis on pragmatism, 'realism' and 'fitting in' more likely to prevail in programmes delivered in labour market settings such as the Public Employment Services.

- A truly empowering approach to curriculum development does not assume a 'deficit' perspective in relation to minority or at risk groups, and does not think of such groups as being made up of persons with problems, but rather as persons with resources. Curricula informed by deficit perspectives will tend to adopt a 'medical' model, whereby curriculum developers see themselves as the 'experts' who understand what the citizens' 'problems' are, and how to address them. Within this mode, curricula are generally designed to 'compensate' for the 'deficiencies' that others are considered to have. In contrast, policies informed by an acceptance and even celebration of diversity are more circumspect when it comes to claiming that 'curriculum experts' have 'the' answers. They will tend to be more open to different approaches to life and career, and consequently more willing to question and reform systems, rather than individuals. UK-Scotland's 'strengths-based approach' is a salutary reminder of the need to embrace difference, seeking out the strengths and positives – such as the ability of clients with dyslexia to think creatively, the exceptional listening skills many hearing impaired

clients develop, and the adherence to rules, attention to detail and focus that some people with Asperger's can offer—all of which are key career management skills.

- CMS curricula should connect with learners' frameworks of relevance. In other words, curricula should recognise, acknowledges and build on learners' life experience, which is considered a source of strength on which other knowledge, skills and understandings can be developed.

- CMS curricula should be co-constructed with learners, not only to ensure relevance, but also to democratise both knowledge and the pedagogical relationship. Curricular programmes are therefore not determined inflexibly in advance, but are rather proposed and negotiated with learners, whose voice (in terms of identification of needs, of articulation of goals, and identification of appropriate pedagogy and assessment) is respected.

- CMS curricula should strive for 'centralised decentralisation'. This principle ensures that programmes are developed in relation to a national framework that defines a minimum knowledge and skills base that is available to all citizens, while at the same time permitting a flexible interpretation and implementation of the framework in response to the specificity of context. The broader national framework goes some way in guaranteeing that all citizens, irrespective of their spatial and social location, have access to the same entitlement, while the flexibility in programme delivery ensures and consolidates the principle of relevance referred to earlier. Finland provides a good example of this approach, having articulated open-ended national development programmes or frameworks for basic, second stage, adult and higher education as well as the employment sector.

3.4 Pedagogy and assessment

Across many countries, the status of CMS as a 'new' area of learning means that it is not burdened by the weight of tradition that defines the teaching and assessment modes used in subjects that have been integrated in curricula in an earlier period, such as math, science, and languages. CMS teachers – such as those in Malta, for instance – have therefore tended to enjoy more freedom in employing experiential and innovative pedagogies, and to use not only instruction, but also counselling, a range of experiential learning strategies (e.g. role play, work shadowing and work experience, case studies), career games, computer-based resources, and so on. Indeed, some see in CMS an opportunity to bring about a paradigm shift in the way learning is organised in schools as well as in higher education, with a greater degree of emphasis on supporting student self-directed learning, active learning methods, and constructivist approaches to meaning-making.

However, histories of curricular subjects show how 'new' subjects – such as physical education, media studies, and home economics, for instance – have attempted to obtain status within the educational system and the curricular pecking order by imitating and taking on board the pedagogical and assessment forms and styles used by more established subjects. In these cases, learning becomes more formalised, falling into the curricular and pedagogical forms that are tightly 'bound' and 'framed'. This has a number of important implications for the definition of the curricular area we are referring to as CMS, particularly in those cases where mainstream curricular principles – such as the organisation of teaching around predetermined and highly structured learning outcomes and key stages – determine what is taught. Rather than being negotiated with learners in response to their life interests and realities, with pedagogical orientations informed by constructivism, CMS will, in this case, tend to be framed within a more behaviourist approach that emphasise content over process.

Pedagogy is not merely a matter of technical skills in enhancing learning outcomes. Pedagogies also embody political orientations that send out strong messages to learners, and can be enabling or disabling. For instance, some CMS programmes aimed at at-risk groups use Individual Learning Plans or Individual Action Planning as their key method of intervention. While such pedagogical approaches appear, at face-value, to be progressive in goal and outcome, a sole focus on the responsibilisation and 'activation' of individuals tends to play down, if not ignore, the impact of the surrounding environment on people who share similar life circumstances. Group approaches acknowledge more explicitly the fact that many have to face a similar set of obstacles when they attempt to transition to the work place, and to manage their career once they do find employment. A focus on these shared circumstances is important in policy terms, as it more easily leads to an acknowledgement of generalised rather than merely individual discriminatory practices, and is thus more likely to generate systemic policies that counteract prejudice. A 'group' approach is also more likely to be politically empowering and enabling, given that people who share similar life circumstances, and who are conscientised to locate the source of their frustrations in deficits in the surrounding environment rather than in themselves, are more likely to exercise an influence on policy.

If CMS are considered to be 'worthwhile knowledge' (in terms not only of know-that, but also know-why, and know-how), then the principle of assessment comes into play, with 'assessment' or 'evaluation' being understood as a set of practices that signal whether 'learning objectives' have been transformed into 'learning outcomes'. Four main reasons might come into play when developing assessment strategies in relation to CMS, none of which are mutually exclusive:

- One can assess in order to provide feedback to learners as to their progress in mastering knowledge, values or skills in relation to a par-

ticular learning objective. Educational theory generally asserts that learners have a right to be given such feedback.

- That assessment can be used to signal to external parties – such as parents, institutions, and employers – that a particular individual has indeed mastered a given learning objective. In this case, the right to such knowledge is attenuated by a careful consideration of a professional code of ethics, which includes recognition of the individual's right to privacy, as articulated in data protection laws.

- The outcome of such an assessment can be codified through the issuing of certificates and formal qualifications, which some consider to be 'symbolic capital' that can be translated into financial and social capital in the labour market and wider society. An important principle here is that any investment in formal learning should be formally acknowledged and rendered visible in ways that give learners something to show for their pains.

- Finally, assessment strategies can be used in order to motivate learners to remain engaged and to do their best to succeed in reaching the learning objectives. This is generally referred to as 'extrinsic motivation', and mixes 'carrot and stick' approaches. In contrast to this is the reliance on 'intrinsic motivation' that sees learners engaged with learning because they recognise its value, rather than because they want the prize that is reserved for successful learners, or to avoid the sanctions that accompany failure.

There are two main positions that are often adopted in relation to assessment of CMS, particularly in the context of the school. The first argues that CMS, by nature, should so appeal to learners due to its relevance to life concerns that the programme should rely on their intrinsic motivation. In this case, assessment should focus on providing feedback to learners so that they become as aware as possible of their successful mastery of the knowledge, skills and

attitudes involved. In this case, particular assessment strategies appear to be more appropriate than others, including, for instance, peer assessment, self-assessment, and portfolio approaches. A good example of the latter is provided by France, which has developed a digital Portfolio of Experiences and Skills (PEC) in twenty universities. Variants of portfolios, whether paper- or web-based, which encourage self-reflection, are used in several other countries, including Austria, Turkey, and UK-Scotland. The notion of having a personal workbook which accompanies students till they leave school seems particularly promising, helping as it does to make tacit knowledge explicit. French secondary schools have adopted a *'passport orientation formation'* (Guidance Training Passport), which is shared with teachers and parents, thus providing students with support in making sense of the career learning developed along the way. Such formative approaches to assessment are seen to be especially suitable to CMS given that these skills are particularly difficult to assess, whether formally or informally. It is difficult, for instance, to assess the outcomes of experiential learning opportunities, such as exploration of work contexts, where the processing of such experiences can extend over a long period of time, and very difficult for the learner to articulate in ways that are susceptible to assessment in traditional ways. Furthermore, much traditional summative assessment sets out to not only grade, but also to implicitly – and sometimes explicitly – rank students in terms of their differential learning achievement. Such grading and ranking seems to be particularly inappropriate in relation to CMS.

A second position argues that within a curriculum and an educational tradition where examinations play a central role, any subject or curricular area that is not formally evaluated ends up appearing as unimportant in the knowledge hierarchy of the institution, and consequently in the eyes of learners. In this case, formal assessment strategies are used in order to ensure continued student engagement and motivation. Other positions include both types

of student evaluation, in some cases giving more importance to one or the other. Clearly, this debate between 'formative assessment' on the one hand, and 'summative assessment' on the other, has more relevance to those educational systems that attempt to develop CMS as a separate area in the curriculum, rather than to those that go for a curriculum infusion approach, where CMS is taught through other subjects as a cross-curricular theme. In the latter case, the CMS programme falls under the same assessment regimes that are practised in other subject areas, for better or for worse.

In many cases, multi-modal forms of assessment are used, reflecting the broader evaluation culture embedded in the national education system. These include formal examinations (e.g. Czech Republic), oral interviews (e.g. Estonia and Turkey), self-assessment (e.g. Sweden), continuous assessment (e.g. Denmark and Estonia), and competence assessment through actual performance proficiency in implementing set tasks (e.g. Austria and Denmark).

Irrespective of the modality or modalities one chooses in terms of assessing learning of CMS, it is important to address a range of issues that relate to the reasons for which one assesses, what it is that one sets out to assess, and how to assess that. Other issues relate to ethical concerns around assessment, including how to record the outcomes of the assessment, whether one should report such outcomes, and if so to whom, and what use is to be made of the results of the assessment.

3.5 Conclusions

Several EU Member States have made progress in integrating CMS in their school curricula, and to a lesser extent deliver elements of these skills to adults through Public Employment Services. In the higher education sector too, innovative approaches have been developed in the context of the Bologna Process. Key challenges that remain include:

- The development of national frameworks that broadly set out CMS entitlements for citizens, while leaving enough flexibility to service providers to remain responsive to the needs of the clientele they serve.
- The articulation of a clear policy regarding the place of CMS in the curriculum, irrespective of whether the modality in which such skills feature, i.e. whether they are allocated their own discrete curricular space, whether they are infused throughout the curriculum, whether they are taught through extra-curricular activities, or a combination of two or more of these strategies.
- The promotion of a clear training strategy for those delivering CMS, whether in the education or PES sector. In schools, additional training is required when CMS is delivered through a curriculum infusion model, since this requires all or most teachers to be aware of their role in teaching CMS.
- The development of adequate resources that support educators in school and PES settings to generate powerful learning environments where CMS can be learnt experientially.
- The identification of areas in CMS programmes that are of particular relevance to target groups, especially those that can be considered to be, in one way or another, at-risk.
- The promotion of strategies that use assessment for CMS learning, than merely of learning.
- Further exploration of the possibility of developing a European CMS framework, which serves not as much as a common 'blueprint' but rather to facilitate further collaboration and dialogue on a range of shared issues between the various Member States of the EU.

Widening access (WP2)[10]

4.1 Context

Widening access has been on the agenda of many countries, with particular reference to how to expand services for different target groups, usage of ICT tools, and how these are managed and funded. International country reviews have indicated that, in most countries, the demand for career guidance exceeds the supply of services. Two aspects of lack of access are identified in particular:

- The needs of a wide range of particular groups of citizens – including employed adults, VET and tertiary students, mothers with young children, women returning to work, older adults, people with disabilities, those in remote communities and disadvantaged groups – are not adequately met.
- Guidance services are still being delivered in a limited range of locations and media, at limited times of the day or week, and at limited points in the life cycle, thus restricting lifelong and lifewide access.[11]

With the present economic crisis and increasingly high rates of unemployment, access to career guidance services has a pivotal role to play, since so many people are in need of high-quality and effective guidance. The present crisis also underlines the necessity of new provisions to widen access for specific target groups.

In the 2008 EU Council Resolution[12], Priority Area 2 is to facilitate access by all citizens to guidance services. The Resolution states that: "Guidance services, as services of general interest, should be accessible to everyone, irrespective of their knowledge base or their initial skills, and should be readily understandable and relevant." To make progress in this priority area, Member States should, depending on their specific situations, consider:

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[10] This chapter is a team effort of the ELGPN Work Package 2 on widening access. The text has been prepared by Professor Fusün Akkök, based on the contributions and reflections from the participating countries and partner organisations: CY, CZ, DE, ES, FR, IS, LT, PL, NL, TR, UK, PES network. Mr. Jean-Marie Lenzi from France and Dr. Gudbjörg Vilhjalmsdottir from Iceland supported the process as the WP2 lead-country representatives.

[11] Akkök, F. (2010). European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network Work Package 2: Widening Access. Peer Learning Activity, Manchester, 1–3 February 2010. Reflection Note. Jyvaskyla: ELGPN.

[12] Council of the European Union (2008). *Better Integrating Lifelong Guidance into Lifelong Learning Strategies.* 2905th Education, Youth and Culture Council meeting, Brussels, 21 November 2008.

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- Actively promoting guidance services with the public and raising their profile, using the full range of information and communication media.
- Offering a clear range of easily accessible services, based on an evaluation of people's aspirations and needs, and taking account of their living and working environments.
- Enabling people to benefit from support in obtaining validation and recognition on the labour market of their formal, non-formal and informal learning outcomes, in order to safeguard their employment and maintain their employability, in particular during the second part of their careers.
- Promoting open access to documentary resources, the provision of support in information searches, individual counselling and institutional provision.

Several of the features of lifelong guidance systems identified in the OECD review[13] are concerned with access to services:

- Transparency and ease of access over the lifespan, including a capacity to meet the needs of a diverse range of individuals.
- Particular attention to guidance access at key transition points over the lifespan (school to work, to higher education etc.).
- Flexibility and innovation in service delivery to reflect the differing needs and circumstances of diverse client groups.
- Processes to stimulate regular review and planning.
- Access to individual guidance by appropriately qualified practitioners for those who need such help, at times when they need it.

- Assured access to service delivery that is independent of the interests of particular institutions or enterprises.
- Access to comprehensive and integrated educational, occupational and labour market information.

Access issues are also addressed by two of the challenges to policy-makers identified in the OECD review:

- To ensure that resource allocation decisions give the first priority to systems that develop career self-management skills and career information, and that delivery systems match levels of personal help, from brief to extensive, to personal needs and circumstances, rather than assuming that everybody needs intensive personal career guidance. The approach needs to be a more developmental and holistic approach for all.
- To ensure greater diversity in the types of services that are available and in the ways that they are delivered, including wider use of self-help techniques, and a more integrated approach to the use of ICT.

Recent evaluations by OECD, Cedefop and the European Training Foundation[14] indicate that demand for lifelong guidance has been expanded due to the increasing rate of change in the labour market and new forms of co-operation between employers and educational institutions. This increasing demand for guidance cannot be met by relying exclusively on traditional forms of guidance. The overwhelming amount of information generated by the Internet is also making it difficult to manage guidance services using traditional methods. A large number of countries identified technology, in par-

[13] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap.* Paris: OECD.

[14] Zelloth, H. (2009). *In Demand: Career Guidance in EU Neighbouring Countries.* Turin: European Training Foundation.

ticular web and phone, as being key drivers for career resource development, as well as enabling more people to access services at a time, place and method most suitable to their needs. Technology is making it possible to provide services through a combination of mediums such as e-guidance and helplines, as well as face-to-face guidance. European countries currently vary considerably in the extent to which they use ICT tools in extending access to guidance.

Well-targeted provisions need to be coherently based on clear national policy priorities and to focus on those groups which are facing the biggest gaps in service provision (for example, young people at key transition points in education and from education to work, drop-outs from education, unemployed young people, those who are disadvantaged on the labour market – e.g. through illiteracy – and unemployed adults). Given the limited resources and the current international economic crisis, existing guidance provision needs to be complemented by cost-efficient delivery modes if the goal of access as an important dimension of lifelong guidance is to be achieved in the long run. Some examples could be fostering career management skills in schools and adult training programmes, encouraging parents to become involved in guidance issues, and providing open access to web-based career information, supported self-help, and e-guidance.

Depending on the demand of demographic changes, widening community access for all target groups (including people in their senior years with active lives) through more and innovative diverse delivery has been on the agenda for several years and is one of the four thematic activities of the ELGPN. The aim of this Thematic Action is stated as being "to explore ways in which to improve equality of access to career guidance for all sections of the population, including the scope for clarifying citizens' rights to career guidance, linked to the social contract between the state and the citizen, and the interface between lifelong guidance and the flexicurity models in ELGPN member countries".

Two field visits, one to France and the other to England, as well as a synthesis meeting in Iceland, were conducted as the WP2 peer learning activities. The Paris/Orléans study visit was organised around the themes of targeting, accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL), and new tools and methods, all linked to extending access. The SWOT analysis conducted by the WP2 members provided a sound background for the visit. The visit provided a picture of the main guidance networks operating in France and highlighted the specialised services available for different target-groups. The event was attended by 24 representatives from 14 countries. The general theme of the Manchester study visit was to demonstrate how technologies are used to widen access to career guidance services for all targets groups within an integrated model in a cost-effective manner. Particular attention was paid to learning from the experience of England and Wales on ICT tools, especially in relation to the new "adult advancement and careers service" in England (see Case Study 4), and to sharing and discussing participants' experiences in the development of universal and differentiated services in their national contexts. The meeting was attended by 20 representatives from 12 countries, and by 21 hosts and presenters. Subsequently, in a two-day meeting in Iceland, the WP2 representatives worked on the synthesis report and visited the Education and Training Service Centre where they received information on the workplace guidance initiative (Case Study 8) and on APEL in Iceland. Seventeen representatives from 11 countries took part in this meeting.

4.2 Progress

It was important to focus the work in WP2 on special aspects of access, as a large range of areas can fall under the heading of "enhancing access". This implies improving provisions in an effort to reach out to all potential users, and especially to those citizens who are most in need. The data from a SWOT analysis provided a good resource for this focus-

ing, and stimulated the national teams to develop a framework for reviewing the present situation in their country in relation to access, contributing to the development of a common understanding. Based on surveys carried out within WP2, the new tools and methods specified in different national contexts for further development to extend access included: web-based services, telephone services, e-guidance, written materials, and mixed models of ICT-based and face-to-face services and APEL.[15]

Furthermore, guidance services that value lifelong access need to consider the changing demands of citizens through their different life stages, regardless of gender, ethnicity and social-class backgrounds. WP2 participant responses indicated a number of particular target-groups, which varied across the countries represented. Those mentioned included: students in general education, drop-outs, university students, employed youth, adults in general, adults over 50, the unemployed, prisoners, and people with special needs.

The members expressed their wish to learn, specifically, about usage of technologies in widening access to career information and other career guidance services for different groups, new creative tools, how these tools were managed and funded, and the qualifications of the personnel who implemented the services. During the implementation of this work programme, several national policy and implementation initiatives took place in Member States. Furthermore, the awareness of the importance of guidance has increased among policy-makers and pushed them to support national projects or national forums, existence of ELGPN indirectly has caused peer pressure and led to different projects. National developments and initiatives in member countries are summarised below.

Developments related to policy included:

- Czech Republic has new legislation on counselling services becoming part of the active employment policies. There are developments of a National Qualification Framework and its embodiment into legislation; further developments include the possibility for acquisition of informal and non-formal learning outcomes, and concept VAE bringing to everyday practice (including implementation of projects to create centres of LLL). Discussions have also been started on improvement of ICT tools, broadening access and increasing the marketing of LLG .

- In 2009, the French Parliament has adopted a new law on Guidance and Lifelong Learning, establishing the right of all citizens to lifelong guidance provided free of charge by the public services. The EU Resolution was passed during the French presidency of 2008, and it helped to stimulate new momentum in policy making in France. The activities of WP2 are congruent with the main policy developments in developing public LLG services in accordance with the new law. Opportunities for co-operation help the implementation of the law, the organisation of access points and development of e-guidance tools. The law also plans a mechanism of recognition of guidance services that can provide people with full and objective information and advice on educational, training and job opportunities and services with high standards of quality.

- In Germany, educational guidance is a priority topic of the Ministry of Education and Research. The ministry has commissioned a consortium to develop a concept for a nationwide "Educational Guidance Service Telephone and Internet Portal". In addition, the Ministry assigned the National Guidance Forum for Education, Career and Employment and Heidelberg University to conduct an open coordination process for the enhancement of the

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15   Akkök, F. (2009). European Lifelong Policy Network Work Package 2: Widening Access. Peer Learning Activity, Paris, 13-15 June: Briefing Note. Jyvaskyla: ELGPN.

quality and professionalisation of educational and career guidance. Moreover, a new funding programme of the Ministry entitled "Local Learning" intends to develop and establish a coherent education management and co-operation structure including guidance at a local level. The high value of guidance for the transition to training and work and the necessity to improve the guidance system through transparency and quality measures are also stated.

- In Greece, EKEP plans at the national level to develop an Interactive Web Portal for counselling and career guidance services for teenagers. A further step will be the design of distance counselling and career guidance services.

- Finland has national development programmes for basic, secondary education, adult and higher education as well as the employment sector to develop information, advice and guidance services in general including individuals' access to guidance.

- In Iceland, new legislation on the licensure of educational and career counsellors was passed in 2009. It states that only those that have been trained as educational and career counsellors at a recognised university can obtain licensure. Students in compulsory and upper secondary schools have a right to educational and career counselling provided by a licensed counsellor. The issue of ICT in guidance was addressed in the national forum and a Centre of Lifelong Guidance Expertise was established in 2009. Moreover, the Law on Adult Education approved on 22 March 2010 and adopted on 1 October 2010 will support workplace guidance and the validation of the non-formal and informal learning processes.

- Italy is putting more emphasis on free access to guidance services in education and in PES.

- In Lithuania, the latest policy decisions (2009) based on the review of the existing information systems highlighted some priorities for more effective use of ICT in guidance as well

as for the interactive career work on further development of the national portal on learning opportunities – the open information, guidance and counselling system (AIKOS). As a part of the Government's plan, the amendments to the National Career Guidance strategy and the new implementation plan should be prepared in 2010. Issues related to access in general, as well as the use of ICT in guidance and APEL in particular, are very important and have to be discussed and further elaborated in the strategy.

- In the Netherlands, developments include a review of the situation with a strategy for evidence-based policy-making in the light of EU development and awareness among policy-makers.

- In Norway, the School Reform led to changes in the system. The responsibility for counselling in the school system has been strengthened and anchored at a leadership level, and the tasks and roles of school counsellors have been clarified and strengthened in the Education Act.

- In Poland, the Ministry of National Education has taken measures to strengthen career guidance services as a part of the modernisation programme for lifelong career guidance. Legislation has been passed on counsellor competences – all career teachers must have qualifications. Progress has also been made on developing a national model for guidance and an information portal for career information both at national and regional levels for students, parents, teachers and counsellors.

- In Slovakia, ICT tools in guidance are part of the e-Government strategy. In 2008 a national guidance forum was established leading to a national concept of guidance. Two acts, the 2008 VET act and the 2009 lifelong learning act, have been adopted. A national LLL project is being prepared with a sub-project on guidance, with the aim of establishing 60 regional centres, an information system and a national programme for practitioners.

Developments in implementation included:

- The new integrated service in France has been launched after many years of documentation to ease access to career counselling through simplified access to information and resources via a single phone number, a single e-mail address and the possibility to chat on-line with career advisers.
- In Germany, the internet portal www.planet-beruf.de is a leading instrument of the PES – responsible for vocational guidance for youth – to support career choice and access to the guidance service (see Case Study 5). Furthermore, the development of the "Educational Guidance Service Telephone and Internet Portal" commissioned by the Education Ministry is at the conception phase. In addition, there are many initiatives on regional (Länder) and local level to widen access to guidance (especially for adults and other target groups).
- In Iceland, a contract was made between the Directorate of Labour, Education and Training Centre and the Lifelong Learning Centres on guidance for the unemployed. Furthermore, the focus of the "Young People Taking Action" project is on the young unemployed.
- In UK (England), career guidance is available face-to-face and by telephone, backed up with comprehensive online information to ensure that people get access to help when, where and how it best suits them. By August 2010, the adult advancement service will become operational and skills accounts will be rolled out across England (see Case Study 4). Moreover, a new strategy for young people's information, advice and guidance (IAG) has been developed to modernise IAG and career education and to make them more accessible.
- In Hungary, a national network and web access are in the process of development.
- In Poland, the "Green Line" project provides better access to labour market programmes

and services offered by the labour offices by means of ICT, callcentre solutions and IT systems of contact centres in particular. In 2010 all labour offices will be connected in the system. Moreover, Euroguidance organised training for career counsellors for the services via telephone and/or internet.

- In Latvia, the provision of information on learning opportunities for different target groups has been strengthened by a national database. Support to teachers in the form of tools and methods for advising students has been maintained, helping students to broaden their awareness of career options.
- In Malta, a walk-in Career Guidance Service will be initiated at college level in the summer of 2010. With this service, the students will be assisted in exploring and developing their skills, in the transition from school to work. The focus during a one-to-one session will be on which career path to choose.
- Spain is in the process of creating a new Portal on Information and Guidance which will widen access to all citizens, regardless of the region they belong to, which is a step forward considering the highly decentralised policy structure in Spain. As regards APEL, and according to a new legislation passed in 2009, the Spanish Ministries of Education and Labour have been working jointly to create a new website that will provide general information about the new accreditation process. Likewise, it will provide self-help tools/techniques to help adult citizens to make an initial evaluation of their realistic possibilities of successfully participating in the accreditation process and also of the possibilities for further learning opportunities.
- In Turkey, the web-based National Career Information System has been launched nationally. The system will serve all the target groups within a lifelong guidance perspective (young, adults, employed, unemployed, women, disadvantaged groups).

4.3   Key messages

A.   Access is an issue of social policy and justice

Equity in access to occupational, educational, training, and employment opportunities is essential in a socially just society. Career guidance has an important role in helping people make informed and careful choices about their opportunities; therefore, equity in access to career guidance is also a social justice issue. Two essential elements of guidance policy – access and effectiveness – may sometimes be in tension with each other. To have a satisfactory balance of effectiveness and access requires a better understanding of the effectiveness of career guidance in relation to its costs. The cost of delivering the interventions has a strong influence on the access that citizens have to the services they need. The ultimate goal is to identify the most effective approach that requires the least investment. It is obvious that some interventions are more costly than others. In one of the few direct cost comparisons of career interventions, the cost per contact for a brief staff-assisted career intervention was 2.4 times lower than individual counselling. Moreover, limitations in the effectiveness and access individuals have to the services are a social justice issue.[16] The key question is: "Who are we responsible for in the delivery of services? Are we responsible only for the users who come through our door, or are we responsible for the citizens in our society who need help with career choices?" Considering the global competition, it is also important to empower the capacity of the active population to keep up the competitiveness of the economy. Services in higher education also need to be highlighted and examined in relation to costs and sources of funding.

B.   The complementary nature of the delivery channels is an important issue in guidance

Broadening access to guidance by making delivery and use easier for citizens whenever and wherever needed is a key area. While technology has been identified by most countries as highly important in the development and dissemination of careers information and services, it is also acknowledged that face-to-face services in the form of individual and/or group work are an essential part of the careers package. Services may be based in schools, colleges, careers centres and in other settings. "Log in, walk in, phone in and look in" indicate different channels of access.

A large number of countries identified technology, in particular web-based and phone, as being key tools in career resource development. This could be reflected in the quotations: "What about people who don't have computers?", "How to match the technologies to the needs of customers?", "Some people need to feel accompanied and valued to boost their confidence". Without the assistance of the guidance practitioner, people with some special needs, e.g. people with reading disabilities, limited verbal ability, limited knowledge, confidence and motivation and with depression or disturbances, may not make effective use of e-guidance. Some may be lacking the IT skills required to successfully access distance services. A recent study in Finland indicated that there is still a need for personal support for individuals in their use of the internet. Different readiness levels of the individuals also set the stage for the modes of delivery to be used. Moreover, unless the necessary modifications or additions are made, individuals with hearing or visual impairment may not be able to use the ICT tools effectively. The key trends with different target groups need to be examined. The new Web 2.0 technologies (Facebook, Twitter) enable people not only to use institutional guidance services with very little technological skills, but also to utilise social networking. The role of different chan-

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16   Sampson, J.P. (2009). Translating career theory to practice: the risk of unintentional social injustice. Keynote paper presented at the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance Conference, Jyvaskyla.

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nels could be emphasised: "We need flexible services to respond quickly to the specific needs of users so as to support social cohesion." On the other hand, excessive use of ICT could reinforce access problems for some groups in society that are already at risk of social exclusion.

C. APEL (accreditation of prior and experiential learning) as an effective methodology for the development of employability

APEL is a process which enables people of all ages and backgrounds to receive recognition and formal credit for learning acquired in the past through formal study and through work and other life experiences.. Validation of informal and non-formal learning helps to improve access and mobility of individuals, both into and within education and employment. Moreover, this process represents an opportunity for individuals to achieve recognition for their skills and competences, thus supports the promotion of equality.   Networking and effective co-ordination between the relevant parties seem to be an essential part of such strategies. Access to adequate guidance and support is necessary to help citizens, especially those with low skills and no employment, to make use of APEL and thereby to value their prior learning.

Countries with a high degree of development have moved from the introduction of validation policies to the implementation of validation practices, schemes and methodologies in most or all parts of the educational system. Most have legal structures in place to support validation methods, together with a strong policy framework. Some examples are Denmark, Finland, France and the Netherlands.[17] The certification of a wide range of experiences and the greater flexibility in the Dutch approach – "Know

where you stand, with your certificate of experience at hand" – summarises the Dutch process of certification of experience. The process leads to a tailor-made programme, with intake and assessment as initial processes, and taking all previous learning into consideration so long as it can be evidenced. The programme matches the competences of a candidate with a formal standard and provides formal accreditation of these competences. The French case of APEL is an interesting example of organising the co-ordination of the various partners involved and the involvement of the intermediary advice centres in the implementation. The French and Dutch cases differ in their methodology. More work and more comprehensive usage of APEL need to be promoted.

D. Technology is enabling countries throughout the world to provide a cohesive and co-ordinated approach to delivering integrated services

The issue of ICT has a significant importance for the work of WP2. In the SWOT analysis, ICT tools were mentioned by all respondents as the key tools for widening access. In the Reflection Note on the first WP2 visit[18], it was indicated that the new technologies have great potential for making access both more feasible and cheaper, creating innovative and flexible service delivery linked to self-access and self-help modes. On the other hand, face-to-face services always have a critical role in service delivery, and the use of ICT has been indicated as complementing rather than replacing the traditional forms of guidance. Moreover, as well as being a transformational tool, ICT could also be a powerful integrative agent of change in the development of a more integrated lifelong guidance system. The close co-operation of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders

[17] Otero, M.S., Hawley, J. & Nevala, A.M. (2008). European Inventory on Validation of Informal and Non-formal Learning. 2007 Update. A Final Report to DG Education and Culture of the European Commission. United Kingdom: ECOTEC.

[18] Akkök, F. (2009). European Lifelong Policy Network Work Package 2: Widening Access. Peer Learning Activity, Paris, 13-15 June 2009: Reflection Note. Jyvaskyla: ELGPN.

in the development of web portals or web-based systems demonstrates the integrative potential of ICT: this is evident, for example, in Slovenia (see Case Study 13) and also in Turkey (see Case Study 6).

E.   Different levels of services are needed to meet individual needs

Using differentiated career guidance interventions to improve access is a key issue. Numerous studies have shown that people vary in their readiness for career choice, and it is very likely that the relative effectiveness of career interventions would be improved if the amount and nature of assistance provided by practitioners were congruent with the individual's readiness for decision making. Furthermore, differentiated service delivery can maximize the cost-effectiveness of career guidance interventions by limiting the provision of individualised interventions over many sessions to people with low readiness levels and who could benefit from brief or self-help interventions.[19] The use of a differentiated service delivery model has been a key aspect in the redesign of career services in several countries, including the UK (England, Scotland, Northern Ireland) and the USA.

These services range from those individuals who are self-motivated and able to make career decisions successfully on their own, to individuals who need substantial assistance in order to do so. An influential model has been the differentiated delivery model developed at Florida State University (http://www.career.fsu.edu/techcenter). This distinguishes three levels of service:

- Self-help services for young people and adults with high readiness for decision making.
- Brief staff-assisted services for young people and adults with moderate readiness.

- Individual case-managed (in-depth) services for young people and adults with low readiness.

The classification of user groups can be elaborated in accordance with national contexts, and differentiated services seem relevant in meeting the needs of different user groups/audiences. In providing services, different levels of practitioners/advisers could be the case, as in England where the information advisers, learning advisers and career advisers have different levels of qualifications to serve the needs of the different users.

F.   Ethical issues concerning use of ICT in guidance

Several potential ethical issues need to be taken into consideration when using services, mainly related to the quality of assessments available on the Internet. These issues include:

- Inadequate guidance support for individuals using e-guidance resources. Some individuals may need assistance from a guidance practitioner to benefit from using a website, like the ones with reading disabilities, limited verbal ability, etc.
- Problems with distance guidance. When using web services, individuals need to have a full understanding about the nature of the services they receive, including what the service entails and how it is delivered (informed consent). Some characteristics or states of individuals make them unsuitable for the distance service delivery, e.g. individuals with severe depression, high anxiety or emotional disturbances, people with lack of IT literacy. Moreover, some individuals or groups may not have access to Internet-based resources and services.
- Validity of career assessments and information available on websites. In most cases, information on how the resource was developed,

19   Sampson, J.P. (2009). Translating career theory to practice: the risk of unintentional social injustice. Keynote paper presented at the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance Conference, Jyvaskyla.

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and the extent of bias towards various interest groups, has been limited.[20]

G. Developing integrated services

To develop integrated services for people of all ages is a new challenge for most Member States, demanding a new institutional context, and a new mentality and culture. Reflections on the change of mentality included: "In France, they are still trying to overcome scepticism about telephone and e-guidance: this visit will help to overcome that." "Previously convinced that face-to-face guidance is better than telephone guidance but the Careers Advice Service approach and their advisers changed my mind." Based on national strategies, to have an institution clearly mandated for this with the necessary resources and funding seems to be a basic prerequisite. The adult advancement and careers service being developed by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in England seems to serve that purpose. The case of England provides a good example, with an array of providers from the private and public sectors and with efforts to develop a close partnership and strong networking between all the partners. Valid assessment tools and reliable career information on the internet and on paper could also be listed as a must. The information must be appropriate to the users' needs and intentions.

H. Standards in provision

This also brings to the fore the issue of standards in information provision. Standards, like validity, reliability, accuracy, objectivity, comprehensiveness, relevance to target groups and timeliness, need to be considered for ICT-based or other career materials for individuals with different needs.[21] Examples include gender stereotyping, and font sizes for people who are partially sighted. The practitioners dealing with career guidance services in the education system are quite diversified and large in terms of numbers. It is a challenging task to ensure that guidance staff are sufficiently prepared as well as empowered for their specific – and partly new – roles, in order to deliver high-quality services. In other words, the competences of the practitioners is a critical point in provisions of guidance services.

Moreover, monitoring, evaluation and impact mechanisms are a vital dimension for effective integrated all-age services, to be able to evaluate the trends and changing balance of usages etc. This is also a matter of managing demand and supply. The demands and barriers to supply might be because of different funding and resources in each country: "Increased unemployment has caused accelerated changes in some countries and moves to merge delivery tools to improve continuity." The new service in England could have some interesting prospects in this respect. This new service aims to create a single service which people can use to help them get on in their careers or into work, and to help to overcome challenges in their lives. It will offer joined-up services, provide a single access point for public funding, provide a range of tools through different channels, and make wider sources of support accessible by working closely with partners in a seamless service.

I. Widening access as a transversal theme

"Ensuring wider use of self-help techniques" is closely interwoven with the systems that develop self-management skills and career information. The development of delivery systems that match a wide range

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[20] Vuorinen, R. & Sampson, J.P. (2009). Ethical concerns in the design and use of e-guidance. http://www.egos-cip.eu/node/139

[21] Sultana, R.G. (2004). *Guidance Policies in the Knowledge Society. Trends, Challenges and Responses across Europe*. A Cedefop synthesis report. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

of personal needs and circumstances also requires qualified practitioners and quality assurance of the systems, as well as close communication, co-ordination and collaboration between all the relevant stakeholders. Continuing education of practitioners should be considered as of utmost importance in keeping them aware of the latest needs of different client groups.

4.4 The path ahead

The interventions used must take certain principles into consideration: user-friendliness, confidentiality, impartiality, equality of opportunity, and maximum accessibility with the lowest per-person cost. It may be necessary to extend some services, or link them to others. In the French case, for example, it is important to be able to complement the services offered within the Cité des Métiers with activities that successfully reach socially excluded groups. This is where the Missions Locales, for instance, come in. Therefore, we need to see career guidance services as a set of services that complement each other in a linked way. The Cité des Métiers is an interesting example of widening access to services for everybody, with quality criteria respect to provide young and adults with personalised advice free of charge along with varied services (Case Study 7).

Services should be proactive: "reaching out rather than waiting for people to come", and "building a culture of learning by raising awareness", to encourage individuals to invest in their own skill development and management with motivation and self-confidence. Workplace guidance in Iceland established in the ten lifelong learning centres is a good example of reaching low-skilled workers and supporting them in skill development (Case Study 8).

Every country is unique in their infrastructures and culture for career resources and service delivery. However, seven features of access seem to set the stage for developments for the future:

- *Coherence and consistency* in the service design and delivery by setting standards.
- *Channelling*, representing the medium for the service delivery.
- *Differentiation* of the services according to the specific needs of the individuals via practitioners or advisers qualified to do so.
- *Penetration* to all target groups. To be able to design and provide services both for adults and young people with different needs and backgrounds is a challenge in all countries. Multi-lingual services within the Careers Advice Service in England could be considered as a good example of penetration and reaching out to all.
- *Targeting* specific attention to the needs of a number of specific target groups, as in the case of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), and prioritising the services. There is a tension between targeting and universal access to services. Expanding and reinforcing access to guidance to different categories of users is a challenge.
- *Marketing* the services. This has a crucial importance in managing the relationship between supply and demand. Marketing was encouraged by the Resolution of the Council of the European Union on guidance which recommends that: "Such services need to be viewed as an active tool, and individuals should be positively encouraged to use them." The marketing strategies used in the Careers Advice Service in England, including press, online, radio, television, social media (Twitter, Facebook) and local activities, could be viewed as an effective underlying reason for the present impact of the service.
- *Co-creating* – participation of users in shaping the services. This is related to penetration but is also a separate issue.

For the next phase of ELGPN, reviews of the national settings on these features, and on initiatives

to address and enhance them, could be suggested. Developing a common framework among a number of different organisations with unique cultures and practices is another major task to accomplish.

Key challenges for the future include:

- A reflection on the present understanding of the guidance systems and the role of practitioners within them.
- How to develop practitioners' competences to use ICT tools.
- How to make effective use of the potential of Web social media and mobile technologies.
- How to evaluate the national resources and service delivery according to the new lifelong guidance paradigm.
- Ethical aspects.
- Ensure the evaluation of different service delivery modes.
- Role of co-operation partners.
- How to allocate funding between different delivery channels in meeting the needs of different priority groups.
- How the legislation defines the citizen entitlements to guidance or the service delivery perspective.
- How to better promote the existence of guidance structures and possibilities to people.

4.5   Conclusions

Proposals for the next phase of the ELGPN's work include:

- To use the experiences of our work package and develop common projects of interesting practices or projects linking with European policy discussions to motivate target groups that are not used to further education, e.g. a counselling project for all citizens with a migration background including second and third generations.
- To widen access for the active senior citizens and the third age and for youth who are at risk in economic crisis.
- To develop activities to make ELGPN more visible at national level.
- To review the common European reference tools and make them more practical.
- To contribute to the development of a common policy framework and minimum goals to be achieved in relation to lifelong guidance at EU level.
- To carry out further work on the competences and supervision of practitioners and interconnection of databases for searching suitable requalification and further professional education (national qualification system, national vocational system, database of educational opportunities).

Co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms in guidance practice and policy development (WP3)[22]

5.1 Context

Strategic leadership in relation to "lifelong guidance" was identified as a significant policy issue in the OECD Career Guidance Policy Review carried out in 2001–03[23] and in the parallel EU review[24]. The reviews highlighted the limitations of a fragmented approach to career guidance provision, and noted in particular the lack of co-ordination in service and resource developments across the education and labour market sectors. They proposed a partnership approach between government ministries and other key stakeholders. At the time of the reviews, only a few European countries[25] had any practical experi-ence of formal policy co-ordination in the field of guidance; elsewhere, the OECD proposal was effec-tively breaking new ground.

The EU Council of Ministers of Education took up the OECD recommendations at its meeting in April 2004. Its conclusions were endorsed in Council of Ministers' Resolutions in 2004[26] and 2008[27]. The latter underlined the need for "greater complemen-tarity and co-ordination between the different areas, with national and local government, businesses, rel-evant agencies, the social partners and local com-munities collaborating to improve the efficiency of reception networks accessible to everyone seeking guidance" It indicated that "to make progress in this priority area, Member States should, depending on their specific situations, consider:

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[22] This chapter is a team effort of the ELGPN Work Package 3 on Co-operation and Co-ordination Mechanisms in Guidance Practice and Policy Development. The text has been prepared by Professor Anthony G. Watts, based on the contributions and reflections from the partici-pating countries and partner organisations: AT, CY, DE, EL, ES, FI, HU, IT, LV, NO, SI, TR, Cedefop, ETF, IAEVG. Dr. Peter Härtel (Austria) and Dr. Bernhard Jenschke (Germany) supported the process as the WP3 lead-country representatives.

[23] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap*. Paris: OECD.

[24] Sultana, R.G. (2004). *Guidance Policies in the Knowledge Society.* Cedefop Panorama Series 85. Luxembourg : Office for Official Publica-tions of the European Communities.

[25] Notably the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Poland and the UK.

[26] Council of the European Union (2004). *Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices on Guidance throughout Life.* 9286/04 EDUC 109 SOC 234.

[27] Council of the European Union (2008). *Better Integrating Lifelong Guid-ance into Lifelong Learning Strategies.* 2905th Education, Youth and Culture Council meeting, Brussels, 21 November 2008.

- developing effective, long-term national and regional mechanisms for co-ordination and co-operation among the key stakeholders in lifelong guidance provision;
- facilitating such co-ordination and co-operation by developing a guidance dimension within national lifelong learning and labour market strategies, in keeping with the concept which each Member State has adopted;
- supporting a partnership policy and the local networking of lifelong guidance services, including by pooling services wherever this proves effective, in the interests of streamlining user access;
- developing a common culture, including by means of quality assurance, among the various services responsible at local, regional and national levels."

It invited the member-states and the Commission to strengthen European co-operation on lifelong guidance in this as in other respects, in particular through the ELGPN.

5.2 Rationale

Lifelong guidance is inherently 'transversal', in the sense that it crosses different sectors, in two main respects:

- In all countries, guidance provision is distributed across many different sectors, under different ministries and other jurisdictions (schools, tertiary education, adult education, public employment services, social partners, the voluntary sector, the private sector).
- One of the key roles of such services is to help individuals to move effectively across sectors in the course of their personal and career development.

Accordingly, effective policies for lifelong guidance need to involve a number of different authorities and stakeholders. A national lifelong guidance forum is a mechanism for bringing these bodies together, in order to produce more effective policy development and more harmonised service provision.

On the basis of the Work Package 3 field visits and discussions[28], our conclusion is that for a national lifelong guidance forum to be recognised as such, it should satisfy four requirements:

- It should involve, or at least be recognised by, the government.
- Its membership should not be confined to government departments but should include other key stakeholders.
- It should embrace the fields of education and employment.
- It should cover both guidance for young people and guidance for adults.

In some cases, alternative mechanisms may be developed to achieve some of the benefits of a national forum.

Based on experience to date, it seems that a lifelong guidance forum or similar mechanism could operate at one or more of three levels:

- *Communication*. This might include exchanging information, and exploring possibilities for co-operation and co-ordination.
- *Co-operation* between partners, within existing structures. This might be largely informal in nature, and based on a co-operation agreement, with decision-making powers being retained by each partner.
- *Co-ordination*. This is likely to require a co-ordinating structure, with operational powers and funding (and possibly a contract or legal mandate).

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[28] See Briefing Notes and Reflection Notes for the meetings held in Ljubljana (15–16 April 2009) and Budapest (3–4 November 2009), and also for the earlier ELGPN meeting held in Vienna (9–10 April 2008).

At the first level (communication), it could take the form of a working party or network or think-tank; at the third level (co-ordination), it is likely to need a more formal and more sustainable structure.

National lifelong guidance forums also perform an important function for the ELGPN itself. The governance document for the ELGPN states that 'where national co-ordination bodies or fora exist, these can provide a suitable basis for the composition of national delegations and for supportive communication and consultation processes'. Accordingly, each country participating in the ELGPN is strongly encouraged to develop a forum or other mechanism with the four characteristics outlined earlier in this section. In relation to the typology above, this could initially be at the level of communication, on a lifelong basis. It could then explore more specific opportunities for co-operation and possibly co-ordination between particular partners, some of which might be more age-specific and/or sector-specific in nature.

Conversely, national forums can benefit from sharing of experience with similar mechanisms in other countries, both through ELGPN and through the biennial International Symposia on Career Development and Public Policy. The experience of Work Package 3 has demonstrated the value of such sharing.

5.3 Progress

Table A indicates that national lifelong guidance forums have now been established in 17 European countries, and are in the process of being established in 10 other countries. In 3 further countries, alternative mechanisms have been or are being established. Thus all member countries are giving attention to improved co-ordination of services. Five detailed case-studies are included at the end of the report as Case Studies 9–13.

Tasks addressed by the forums and other mechanisms established to date include:

- Establishing common definitions of guidance.
- Mapping services and identifying gaps in provision.
- Developing quality standards and quality-assurance systems.
- Developing competence frameworks and accreditation schemes for guidance practitioners.
- Promoting lifelong guidance as an integral part of lifelong learning and other strategies.
- Using EU-funded projects strategically to support system development.

5.4 Key messages

Recent experiences of countries establishing national forums have largely endorsed the ten 'key messages' outlined in a Cedefop manual designed to help countries interested in setting up such forums.[29] These relate to the need:

(1) To make a clear connection to lifelong learning, employment and social inclusion strategies, and to articulate the role of lifelong guidance as a public good in relation to these strategies.

(2) To establish shared definitions and terminology.

(3) To be selective in determining those invited to participate.

(4) To have clearly identified goals, tasks and roles.

(5) To have clear leadership, strong champions, and strong commitment from key parties.

(6) To define clearly the relationship with the government (including, where appropriate, regional and local government).

(7) To have a secretariat which is independent or at least ring-fenced.

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[29] Cedefop (2008). *Establishing and Developing National Lifelong Guidance Policy Forums*. Thessaloniki: Cedefop. (http://www.cedefop. europa.eu/EN/Files/5188_en.pdf).

(8) To encourage evolution, but remain true to the core mission.

(9) To be aware of the risks of role conflict.

(10) To strive to work from the viewpoint of the individual citizen, recognising the public benefits of doing so.

Experience indicates, however, that different key messages are likely to be salient at different stages of development. Thus, for example:

- For those still considering whether or how to establish a national forum, issues (8) and (9) are likely to be unimportant, and (4) might be premature (establishing an inter-institutional dialogue is the first essential step).
- On the other hand, for those with well-established forums, issues (4), (8) and (9) might be very important.
- For those in the early stages of managing a forum, all ten key messages are likely to be important.

In addition, experience suggests that there may need to be some pragmatism in the case of issue (7); and that on issue (3) it might be possible to link an open-membership forum with a more selective advisory council (as in Germany).

5.5 Structures, processes and challenges

A. Top-down or bottom-up?

Of the issues covered in the 'key messages' (above), issue (6) – the relationship of the national forum to the government – seems to be pivotal, in the sense that the options open for resolving many of the other issues, and the ways in which they are likely to be addressed, stem from it.

In some countries, the process has been 'top-down', with the national forum being set up by the government, possibly through legislation (e.g.

Denmark). It may be established with two different purposes:

- As a dialogue forum only – as in Denmark.
- As having a recognised role in policy formation – as in Austria.

In other countries, on the other hand, the process has been 'bottom-up', with the national forum being established on the initiative of a number of non-governmental organisations – as in Germany, for example.

Where the government actively supports the concept of a forum, but prefers it to be created and managed independently, it may support the forum through sending observers and through project funding.

On the other hand, the process is more complex than this:

- The establishment of the 'top-down' forum in Austria has been the result of a long process, in which an NGO had played an important catalytic role, working in close partnership with the government.
- In the 'bottom-up' approach in Germany, a *kuratorium* has been established as an advisory board to the forum, providing a high-level link with government policy.

Instead of thinking of these as separate categories, therefore, it may be better to think of them as different processes, which may be combined or alternated in varying ways.

In principle, the potential advantages of a 'top-down' approach include:

- That it provides a funding base.
- That it provides a direct link with government policy.
- That it makes it easier to secure selective participation (cf. key message 3).

On the other hand, the potential advantages of a 'bottom-up' approach include:

- That it may be more readily sustainable, especially when there are changes of government (what one government sets up, another can pull down[30]).
- That it has more independence of action.
- That it may produce a greater sense of ownership, and more motivated participation.

Decisions on such matters are likely to be influenced by the traditions of policy-making processes within the country concerned, and in particular, whether there is a tradition of involving the social partners and other stakeholder bodies in these processes.

Forums can also be used by governments for other purposes than policy-making: for example, for developing quality-assurance systems.

Issues that arise include:

- Where the forum is established by one government ministry, the active participation of other government ministries may not be assured.
- Where the forum is established by the government, its relationship to government policy is likely to be clear but possibly constrained. Where it is not, key issues for the forum are: how it can seek to influence government policy; and the extent to which it can criticise the government and still be recognised and (in whatever forms are appropriate) supported by it.

B. Regional and local forums

The regional and/or local dimension of public policy relating to lifelong guidance provision is very important in countries where significant powers relating to education and/or employment are devolved to regional/local authorities. Examples discussed in Work Package 3 included Germany and Norway. In such countries, co-operation and co-ordination at regional/local level may be at least as important as at national level. Moreover, neither of these levels of co-operation and co-ordination may be effective without the other.

The dynamics of the relationship between national and regional/local processes vary. In some cases, national policies may include attention to securing co-operation and co-ordination at regional/local level. In others, the initiative may be taken at regional/local level, leading to demands for supportive and complementary action at national level.

Co-operation and co-ordination at regional/local levels may be complicated by the different structures of devolution operating across education and employment respectively. It is common, for example, for powers relating to education to be devolved to elective regional assemblies or local councils, but for employment powers to be held by central government with some administrative delegation (usually with strong 'steering signals') to regional or local offices. The different dynamics of these arrangements need to be taken into account in the structure of any co-operation or co-ordination arrangements.

In countries with strong devolution, national bodies representing regional or local authorities may also play an important role at national level. This is the case in Germany, for example.

C.   The integrative potential of ICT

An important issue which has emerged in some national case-studies, notably in Hungary and Slovenia, is the integrative potential of bringing together career information and guidance providers from different sectors to develop a common web portal, built around a password-protected personal portfolio. The merits of such an approach include:

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30   Though continuity of civil servants can support the sustainability of 'top-down' approaches.

- That it shares costs.
- That it places the needs of the user at the centre of service design, and is therefore more likely to attract users.
- That in both of these respects, each partner gains added value from the involvement of the others.

The potential implications of such a system could be more extensive if, for example:

- All citizens are encouraged to use the web portal, including all school pupils setting up their e-portfolio as part of their school curriculum.
- Training is provided to all career guidance staff and to relevant teachers and others on how to incorporate use of the web portal in their service provision.
- The websites include 'hot links' to interactive e-counselling support through telephone, web chat or email.
- They also include strong references to supportive face-to-face career counselling resources wherever they exist, thus making the lifelong guidance system transparent to the user.
- This is linked to jointly agreed quality standards (only provision meeting these standards was listed).
- The quality standards are linked to a brand which provides a basis for joint marketing.

If such steps are taken, ICT is acting not just as a tool but also as a powerful agent of change in the development of a more integrated lifelong guidance system. It can thus be the means through which service providers can transform their separate, sector-based and provider-centred provision into a user-centred lifelong guidance system, with the web portal (including the user's e-portfolio) conceptually at the centre, supported by co-ordinated sectoral provision of face-to-face and other services. A national forum or other co-ordination mechanism can help to realise its potential in this respect.

5.6 Conclusions

On the basis of Work Package 3's experiences and discussions, it is evident that there has been significant progress in many countries in developing stronger synergies between different ministries, and between ministries and other stakeholders, in the development of lifelong guidance systems. These include cross-policy approaches and stronger co-operation at both national and regional levels. In many of these countries, the process of sharing across countries through the ELGPN has played a valuable catalytic role. It is important that this process be sustained, and extended to involve further countries according to their needs and demands.

Quality assurance and evidence base for policy and systems development (WP4)[31]

6.1 Context

WP4 deals with links between guidance policies, research and practice, in two respects:

- The role of and development of quality assurance (QA) approaches in guidance.
- The evidence which is or could be produced to underpin, explain, and legitimise the investment of resources in guidance activities.

The WP4 working methods have reflected the general peer-learning and networking mode of the ELGPN. Peer learning events/field visits have taken place in Berlin (May 2009), Helsinki (October 2009) and Tallinn (March 2010). National events were aligned with the field visits, thus creating synergy between the two sets of proceedings in making use of the European experts as main speakers at the national

events. Briefings by the Expert Consultant laid out essential issues and provided an overview of previous research in terms of quality assurance and evidence in guidance. This included examples from the participating member countries of WP4, supplemented by examples from other parts of the world, along with links to additional literature, thus providing the participants with a considerable foundation to build on. After each field visit, a Reflection Note was provided by the Expert Consultant, to pull together the main presentations and conclusions of the meetings. For briefings and notes, see http://elgpn.eu

This report:

- Provides an overview and some examples of national quality standards/guidelines, and of approaches to establishing evidence for public policy and systems development in guidance.
- Draws upon Briefing Notes and Reflection Notes from WP4 Field Visits (Berlin, May 2009; Helsinki, October 2009), as well as European and non-European research evidence.
- Reflects the outcomes of discussions which have taken place in the WP4 group in 2009–10,

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[31] This chapter is a team effort of the ELGPN Work Package 4 on Quality assurance/Evidence-base for policy and systems development. The text has been prepared by Professor Peter Plant, based on the contributions and reflections from the participating countries and partner organisations: DE, DK, EE, EL, FI, FR, HU, LU, LV, PT, UK, Cedefop, IAEVG. Mr. Steffen Jensen (Denmark) and Dr. Helena Kasurinen (Finland) supported the process as the WP4 lead-country representatives.

and add further reflections for possible future actions.

- Presents an overview of QA approaches in the different member countries of WP4.
- Provides suggestions for QA indicators as elements of a potential QA framework for guidance.
- Presents selected interesting examples from participating countries (Case Studies 14–18).

6.2   Rationale

In a number of recent resolutions and other policy documents, both the EU Commission and the OECD have focused on career guidance and information as key policy areas in terms of lifelong learning, and economic and social development. With this backdrop, quality issues and evidence in guidance come to the policy-making forefront: career development and career guidance are pivotal, not only in terms of sustaining economic, societal and personal development, but also in terms of creating a sustainable future, economically, socially, environmentally, and at an individual level.

Many policy interests cross in guidance quality issues, and evaluating the impact of career guidance interventions is complex. Effective evaluation requires "...large-scale research with complex experimental designs and statistical controls", as noted by OECD.[32] Evaluations can measure what have been labelled "hard" and "soft" outcomes:

- Hard outcomes can include tangible changes in work, learning or training.
- Soft outcomes may involve changes in attitudes to work, training and learning, e.g. having more confidence, increased awareness, motivation, and more clarity around options.

Evaluations of evidence can also distinguish between immediate, intermediate and longer-term outcomes (for the individual, economy and society). There is some empirical evidence to suggest that career guidance generally can have a positive impact on short-term learning outcomes, such as self-awareness, decision-making skills and knowledge of opportunities. However, as the OECD report comments: "Evidence on the impact of career guidance upon medium-term behavioural outcomes such as educational achievement or dependency upon welfare benefits is less robust, but generally positive. Evidence on longer-term impacts is very limited, and will need better longitudinal research."

Most research to date on the effectiveness of interventions has been short-term and focused on immediate effects, or on attitudinal change (for an overview, see http://www.guidance-research.org/EG/benefits/ebg). The single most common finding is that career guidance interventions have a positive effect on participant satisfaction. There are many challenges for research into the effectiveness of career guidance interventions, including:

- The lack of agreed common outcome measures in the field of career development or common methods used to collect data.
- The range of factors that can influence individual career choices, including the number of people potentially involved in helping the individual make decisions.

Even for successful active labour market programmes, it is unclear whether they would continue to be cost effective on a larger scale. Thus, few studies have ventured into the difficult area of assessing a cost/benefit ratio to guidance. The Scottish all-age guidance service, Careers Scotland, has come up with a tentative figure (1:5), which suggests that it pays to invest in guidance. If these figures stand up to scrutiny, this would strongly legitimise career guidance. In policy terms, such cost/benefit figures are the ultimate argument for societal investments

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[32] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap*. Paris: OECD.

in career guidance: they represent a "quality" in themselves.

Most QA approaches comprise a monitoring aspect as well as a policy perspective. In addition, the guidance practitioners' view on QA is relevant. This includes reflections on the guidance practitioners' view of QA as a tool of continuing development of the services on the basis of evidence/input from the QA systems.

6.3 Findings

A. Quality assurance

Of the participating WP4 countries, some have established comprehensive or sector-based QA systems:

- In Denmark, benchmarking of guidance services in conducted in a centrally driven system of mainly numerical outcome indicators linked to educational take-up and retention. This represents a sectoral approach which deals with educational guidance (see Case Study 14).
- The UK has different approaches in each of the part of the country. Scotland and Wales have comprehensive, all-age guidance approaches, which are reflected in their QA systems. England's approach is more sectoral, but features the Matrix accreditation system which covers QA in adult guidance and information services/organisations.
- Greece has a model QA system which is largely focused on the input side of guidance, grouped into 6 benchmarks with 33 quality indicators (see Case Study 16).
- Hungary is applying an evidence-oriented QA approach over the coming years (see Case Study 17)
- In Germany, the National Guidance Forum – supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research – has initiated an open process of co-ordination with relevant stakeholders

and policy makers to design a quality-assurance development framework that covers all guidance sectors (see Case Study 15). In addition, the German PES already operates a QA system which takes the quality and outcomes of guidance interventions as a contribution to the overall achievement of the organisation, including placement activities and financial support. Data are derived from the customer database and regular customer surveys.

- The Finnish National Board of Education made a proposal on quality criteria for comprehensive education in 2009, in which guidance was included. The information and evidence base for career guidance services at the Finnish PES consists mainly of data derived from the systematic client and career guidance database, regular customer and quality feedback surveys, and occasional studies on outcomes of services, results and productivity.
- In some countries, organisations have established a professional register as part of a QA process. Examples include the German BB Register for guidance practitioners (with the possibility to be accredited as qualified counsellor on the basis of certain quality requirements (http://www.bbregister.de), and the British scheme run by the Institute of Career Guidance (http://www.igc.ie/membership/membership-of-the-igc).

An important focal point in relation to quality in guidance provision is the centrality of the users in guidance, not only as consumers (through, for example, client satisfaction surveys), but as actively involved European citizens, who have a say in the way in which guidance is offered and evaluated (cf. the European Common Reference Tools, which includes two sections on QA: Sections 2.4.1 and 3.1). Such citizen-focused issues at these levels, however, seem to be largely neglected in the current examples of QA systems.

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Some countries have discussed the issue of a guidance charter or that the citizens should have a right to guidance, as part of a QA approach, based on the professionalism of qualified guidance counsellors. The EU Resolution on Lifelong Guidance (2004) stresses the issue of access and reads:

> "As appropriate and given local circumstances, all European citizens should have access to guidance services at all life stages, with particular attention being paid to individuals and groups at risk."

Relevant national developments include:

- In Iceland, in the midst of its severe economic crisis, the Althing (Icelandic parliament) passed a law in March 2009 which stated that only certified guidance counsellors (with an MA in guidance) could be employed as such, and that all students have a right to guidance from a certified guidance counsellor.
- Under the heading of "Nobody left behind", Norwegian preventive approaches to lifelong learning include a right to guidance, in particular for the marginalised.
- Germany has a long tradition in this field: the Social Code (Sozialgesetzbuch, SGB I, §3) includes a general right to guidance in the social and the labour market sector, which is elaborated in other sub-sections.

Other related themes which have been considered in the field of QA systems include:

- The need to develop more robust QA systems which are based on a plethora of scientific approaches, such as qualitative and narrative research methods, in addition to the largely quantitative approaches used at present.
- ISO 9000 systems have been introduced as part of or in lieu of other QA systems: they represent an approach which views guidance as a product. This creates some difficulties in the practical application of such QA systems, as guidance is not "in the production line".
- EFQM approaches draw upon a Total Quality Management concept, focusing primarily on formal operational processes rather than on common professional standards.
- "Top-down" QA approaches may be more manageable from a governmental point-of-view, but they often lack the sense of ownership that "bottom-up" approaches may offer, even though these in turn may be more patchy. On the other hand, most countries have sectoral and patchy QA approaches anyway.
- Most QA systems are based on self-evaluation of sectorally based guidance units. There are few examples (e.g. Matrix in the UK) of comprehensive externally based QA systems. Guidelines or standards can be seen as: input standards (e.g. guidance professionals' standards, organisation/service-related standards); process-related standards; or output standards. Most QA systems are either professionally (input) or output oriented, or both. Few focus on the guidance process itself.
- A plethora of quality guidelines exist on various aspects of guidance, at both national and international levels. Thus, for example, the National Career Development Association (NCDA) in the USA has issued guidelines limited to the quality of materials used in guidance: (a) Guidelines for the Preparation and Evaluation of Career and Occupational Information Literature; (b) Guidelines for the Use of the Internet for Provision of Career Information and Planning Services; (c) Guidelines for the Preparation and Evaluation of Video Career Media; and (d) Career Software Review Guidelines (www.ncda. org). Internationally, the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance has published "Ethical Standards" as well as "International Guidance Practitioner Standards" (www.iaevg.org).

B.   Evidence

It became clear in the WP4 discussions that a lot of data that has potential for the development of indicators of evidence is already being collected in member countries, but that in many cases such data are not readily accessible, are collected at regional or institutional level but not consolidated at national level, and not used for guidance purposes. Such key words as "outputs" and "outcomes" (not to mention the distinctions between "information", "advice" and "guidance") have different meanings in different national contexts.

With this backdrop, it is not surprising that of the WP4 participating countries, few, if any, have established comprehensive evidence-based systems. Some approaches, however, contain some elements of evidence-based guidance policy approaches:

- In Denmark, benchmarking of guidance services is conducted in a centrally driven system, where evidence is seen as mainly numerical outcome indicators linked to educational take-up and retention, supplemented by end-user surveys from 50,000 pupils/students. This represents a sectoral approach which deals with educational guidance, and is based mainly on correlations between guidance and, for example, educational take-up/retention.
- The UK has different approaches in each part of the country. Scotland, for instance, has a comprehensive, all-age guidance approach, where evidence is depicted as a range of individual and societal outcomes, including economic benefits (see box below).
- Hungary, likewise, has entered into cost/benefit considerations as evidence. Based on the concept of SROI (Social Return on Investment), the Hungarian calculations led to a cost/benefit ratio of 1: 4.77 in relation to a particular Sheltered Employment Programme, known as Salva

Vita. These figures are illustrative, but limited to this particular programme.
- The information and evidence base for career guidance services at the Finnish PES consists mainly of systematic client and career guidance database and statistics derived from the database, systematic customer and quality feedback surveys, and occasional studies on outcomes of services, results and productivity. All client and career guidance service data are entered into the labour administration database in connection with the client service.
- In Greece, indicators in the Model System of Quality Assurance in Guidance produce indications for quality development. According to the theory underpinning the model, the values produce indicators, the indicators produce indications and the indications produce evidence or measuring tools.
- In the German PES, guidance is seen as one of several interventions which influence the overall outcomes of the PES. For instance, in the vocational guidance department of the PES (which includes placement into apprenticeship training), the outcomes of the guidance services are measured by an index which is constructed by several indicators including: successful integration into apprenticeship training, successful filling of apprenticeship vacancies, and a customer satisfaction index based on a yearly survey.

6.4   Issues and challenges

A.   Indicators and benchmarks

A favoured way to produce evidence is to use *indicators* which point to evidence of impact. Den Boer et al. noted that "Indicators are statistics that allow for value judgements to be made about key aspects

of the functioning of systems".[33] Several EU-funded Leonardo projects have dealt with such quality issues, and have produced tools (matrices, handbooks) to facilitate QA approaches (see, for example, www.giantproject.org, www.gircproject.org or www.aqor.droa-eu.org). Earlier work along these lines includes Cedefop's (2004) *Quality Guidelines and Criteria in Guidance* (see http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/Quality_criteria_study_final_report.pdf).

With a view to comparing such indicators across organisations and different types of service delivery, and ultimately across national borders, *benchmarks* emphasise the comparative application of standards and indicators.

Control-group-based research, to mention one obstacle, would imply that some people for a period of time would receive much sophisticated guidance, whereas another group would get none at all. Firstly, this would be impossible, as there are many sources of career guidance. And secondly, it would not be societally justified to deprive a group of this service. Thus, evidence in guidance, be it "hard" or "soft", is always part of wider societal issues and activities. It is never monocausal.

B.   Outcome and impact

Looking at evidence and designing indicators for measurement, it is essential to distinguish between "outcome" and "impact". This can be seen in the Scottish results reported below, on the impact of career guidance in learning, economic and social policy terms. Both outcomes and impacts can be observed on an individual level, organisational level, and on a societal/economic level.

Career guidance leads to improved:
Learning outcomes
• Greater access to learning and training
• Greater participation in learning and training
• Improved retention rates in education and training
• Greater education and training attainment and higher level skills
• Improved motivation and hence attainment in education and training
Learning impacts
• Higher wage levels through gaining higher qualifications

Economic outcomes
• Higher levels of participation in employment
• Lower levels of unemployment
• Improved job tenure through increased motivation at work
• A more responsive and flexible workforce
• Improvements in the employability of individuals
Economic impacts
• Higher wage levels
• Improved productivity

Social outcomes
• Increased confidence
• Increased well-being which contributes to health benefits for society
• Reductions in crime and offending behaviour
• Greater levels of social inclusion
Social impacts
• Reductions in lost earnings and lower productivity through lost education and training
• Reductions in social security, public health costs and other public costs
Source: Careers Scotland (2007).

This list of outcomes and impacts gives a comprehensive picture of the kinds of evidence which could potentially be taken into account. Few are in fact, at the present stage. Economic benefits have, tentatively, been stipulated by Careers Scotland. Broader economic benefits of guidance have been highlighted earlier, as have the wider social impacts of guidance. Other authors have pointed to a range of guidance outcomes/ impacts. American Mark Savickas, for example, created a list of a dozen evidence points under the heading "What we know for sure", including higher job satisfaction, productivity, and creativ-

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[33]   Den Boer, P., et al. (2005). *Indicators and Benchmarks for Lifelong Guidance: Draft Final Report.* Thessaloniki: Cedefop.

ity with people who have had guidance compared to those who have not (http://www.crccanada.org/crc/files/newlet48en.doc). Similarly, Gillie & Isenhour[34] produced a list which highlights a wider range of evidence areas, including, for example, better educational results, better coherence between training/education and job, shorter/more efficient training/education, fewer educational dropouts, etc.

C. Evidence based on longitudinal studies

Similarly, based on longitudinal studies in the UK, Bimrose et al.[35] found evidence of career resilience. A fourfold typology of career decision-making was tested and found to be stable over a two-year period. These styles were: strategic, evaluative, aspirational and opportunistic. Results showed evidence of:

- Greater access to education and training.
- Greater participation in education and training.
- Increased confidence.
- Improved motivation and hence attainment in education and training.
- Improvements in the employability of individuals.

Bysshe et al.[36] found that guidance pays as an investment in terms of saved unemployment benefits and higher wages. One step further into this argument, guidance has a role to play in terms of social cohesion, equal opportunities and social inclusion. In short, there is already plenty of evidence of the impact of guidance. An ideal situation in terms of evidence-based policy making in guidance would

imply that policies have solid research-based foundations. This may be the case, but in fact few examples exist of substantial evidence-based policy-making in guidance.

Official reports, however, are often highly critical of guidance outcomes and evidence. Swedish governmental reports have seen guidance as ill co-ordinated, with no quality-assurance systems and poor evidence. A similar Danish example depicts a system which spends one billion Danish kroner a year on activities which are poorly documented, and dealing with the wrong type of clients.

D. Learning outcomes and user involvement

One possible approach, discussed in the WP4 group, was the development of a common learning outcomes framework in guidance on a pan-European level: a European Blueprint for Life/Work, along the lines of those produced in Canada (http://www.blueprint4life.ca/) and Australia (http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/learningandwork/pages/Preparing_for_transitions/Australian_Blueprint/?reFlag=1). This issue is being addressed in WP1 (see Chapter 3).

E. Levels of evidence and methodological approaches

Creating evidence in guidance does not represent one single approach. It can be established at a number of different levels:[37]

- Level 1 – Opinion studies, where users of guidance services provide feedback on the perceived effects of the services they have received.
- Level 2 – Outcome measurement studies with no counterfactuals. 'Counterfactuals' are indications of what would have happened in the

34 Gillie, S. & Isenhour, M.G. (2003). *The Educational, Social, and Economic Value of Informed and Considered Career Decisions.* Washington, DC: America's Career Resource Network Association.

35 Bimrose, J., Barnes, S.-A. & Hughes, D. (2008). *Adult Career Progression and Advancement: a Five Year Study of the Effectiveness of Guidance.* Coventry: Warwick Institute for Employment Research and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills.

36 Bysshe, S., Hughes, D. & Bowes, L. (2002). *The Economic Benefits of Guidance: a Review of Current Evidence.* CeGS Occasional Paper. Derby: Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.

37 Hughes, D. (2009). *Evidence and Impact: Careers and Guidance-Related Intervention*. Reading: CfBT Education Trust. http://www.eep.ac.uk/DNN2/Portals/0/IAG/interactiveDocument_v20_web.swf

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absence of the guidance intervention. If no evidence on counterfactuals is available, there is no basis on which to attribute causality.

- Level 3 – Outcome measurement studies with weak counterfactuals. These are more robust than Level 2, but still subject to reservations
- Level 4 – Outcome measurement studies with control by calculation. Here multivariate statistical techniques are used to control retrospectively for those who have and have not been exposed to guidance interventions.
- Level 5 – Experimental studies with a control group. Classically, this involves random assignment to guidance and non-guidance (placebo) groups; alternatively, it may be carried out by constructing a control group.

6.5 Results

One major output of the field visits and peer learning events is a comprehensive overview of policies and practices regarding QA systems in the participating countries, including "work in progress". The matrix in Annex 6 shows that 7 countries (AT, DK, FR, GR, PT, SE, UK) have indicated that they have established a nationwide QA system in career guidance which covers all sectors (education, employment, all-age services, compulsory schools and higher education, groups with special needs, public and private services, etc.). Some countries have launched nationwide projects to develop feedback mechanisms either with their national funds or using the opportunities under the ESF. According to the national responses, the ELGPN has acted as a catalyst to support many of these processes.

Having reviewed numerous policy initiatives and interesting practices in the participating countries regarding quality assurance in career guidance, as well as a lot of research done in order to provide an evidence base for policy development, the members of WP4 decided to draw, on this basis, a suggestion for elements to be included in a QA Framework. The five common reference points for quality-assurance systems for guidance provision, developed by the EC Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance (see European Common Reference Tools), comprised:

- Citizen and user involvement.
- Practitioner competence.
- Service improvement.
- Coherence.
- Coverage of sectors.

These provide a widely recognised basis for this, as they were designed to cover guidelines for guidance activities across all sectors, undertaken by public as well as private agencies, employers, trade unions and other non-state providers. However, the five reference points do not refer explicitly to potential outcomes and the impact of career guidance, and how these are linked to quality of guidance provision and guidance delivery. The group accordingly decided to add two further dimensions:

- Outcomes.
- Impact.

The outline QA Framework in Annex 5 comprises a matrix of the above-mentioned "reference points", including the outcome dimension, and a comprehensive list of indicators assigned to the reference points, based on an input-process-outcome model. This includes suggestions for data which are available or have to be collected in order to measure or assess how and to what extent the indicator is met. Further work on the indicators and on the data required should be undertaken in the next ELGPN working period.

The following chart gives an overview of selected indicators from Annex 5:

Reference point	Selected indicators
Citizen and user involvement	✓ Availability of information about rights and services ✓ Customer reaction systems in operation and used ✓ Regularly customer satisfaction surveys published/used
Practitioner competence	✓ Nationally/regionally accepted defined standards ✓ Certification/accreditation systems ✓ Training requirements and availability Supervision required ✓ Professional behavior and use of adequate methods
Service improvement	✓ Existence and compulsory use of QA systems ✓ Existence and compulsory use of defined standards for service delivery (regarding code of ethics, methodology, client-counsellor ratio, service circumstances, financial resources, administrative procedures, ICT equipment, updated information, labour market information, service delivery for clients with special needs, etc.) ✓ Compulsory development of an action plan with clients ✓ Compulsory documentation of the guidance process and results ✓ Regular system monitoring to assess the service improvement and results, with feedback to managers and practitioners
Coherence *(including coverage of sectors)*	✓ Existence of an all-age service and/or formal co-operation and co-ordination agreement between different service providers ✓ Agreement on common principles
Outcomes/impact: – Learning outcomes – Labour market/ economic outcomes – Social inclusion outcomes *(each on individual, economic, society level)*	✓ Significant improvement of client's knowledge and competences, career management skills, confidence level, decision making competences, job readiness, etc. ✓ Transition rates to next level of education/training/ employment ✓ Improvement of retention rates and drop-out rates ✓ Successful matching processes on the labour market ✓ Level and duration of unemployment ✓ Improvement of labour supply according to demand ✓ Cost-effectiveness of the service and return on investment

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The draft framework consists of both qualitative and quantitative indicators, depending on the nature of the indicator, and on the guidance sector in question. The WP4 members are aware that designing a QA framework based on mostly quantitative indicators is quite ambitious, taking into account all the methodological problems described in the previous sections. In addition, there is the danger of unintended effects if QA is exclusively directed towards quantitative measurement. This may be the case if a guidance service is exclusively measured by school drop-out rates or by the number of graduates. The WP4 group emphasises that there has to be a fair balance between the professional need for qualitative evaluation, and the demand of policy-makers and service managers for empirical evidence and cost-benefit analysis, which is needed to justify the investment of tax payer's money into lifelong career guidance services.

The aim of the draft QA framework is not to impose it on member countries but to initiate and encourage a discussion on how to agree the elements to be included in a QA approach to career guidance – thus following similar European work that has been done already, e.g. the European QA framework in VET and in higher education. It is essential for the QA framework, its feasibility, and its potential implementation that there is a broad common understanding and ownership of this concept among ELGPN members. This process too will be a task for the next ELGPN phase.

6.6 Conclusions

Based on the draft QA framework (Annex 5) more work has to be done during the forthcoming working period of ELGPN on the design and piloting

of tools and instruments for a common European framework for QA in career guidance, in particular in terms of indicators and data collection. It is proposed that further progress could be made by piloting the proposed framework. This approach was also favoured in the earlier work of the UK National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance, which produced a series of *Quality Standards for Learning and Work* (1996–2000), both at a generic level, and for different guidance sectors.

With this backdrop, the recommendations are that the ELGPN should work along these lines:

- Get more countries involved in the discussion on the QA framework in order to gain a broader ownership and engagement for this issue, e.g. by establishing links to the WP1 and WP2 in particular or by "twinning exercises".

- Use the proposed elements of a QA framework based on:
    - A small number of agreed quality criteria.
    - Agreed standards for these criteria.
    - A small number of indicators for measurement.
- Draw conclusions for the updating and further development of the Common Reference Tools and making them more concrete and operational (feeding into the new Task Group 2).

Thus, the next step would be for the ELGPN to:

- Continue and finalise the QA framework with regard to reducing the number of indicators, work on further operationalisation of indicators, and decide on required data collection
- Launch a pilot study in several countries which are interested in testing the proposed indicators and the QA framework.

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7

EU policy monitoring from a lifelong guidance perspective (TG1)[38]

7.1 Introduction

The European Union faces new challenges both within and outside its borders. The economic situation in the European Union has significantly worsened as a result of the global and EU financial crisis, the effects of which include increasing unemployment and social inequality. In addition, demographic change, especially the ageing population, rapid technological progress, the development of the knowledge economy and society, and the challenges posed by the need for sustainable development, all require relevant EU and national policies to address these challenges and the anticipation of skills needs.

In this context, lifelong guidance has a key role to play in European education & training, employment and social cohesion policies. One of the key roles of the ELGPN is to ensure that lifelong guidance is fully reflected in relevant EU policy processes and policy documents, and to monitor how the role of guidance is taken into account as a key strategic component of lifelong learning.

7.2 Rationale

Task Group 1 was established by ELGPN with a two-fold role:

- to ensure that the outcomes of the network activities have an impact upon regional, national and European lifelong guidance policy development;
- to share and transfer information so that all ELGPN members can have access to such information and can have an opportunity to be involved in the relevant policy processes.

The tasks of TG1 were therefore defined as being:

- To support the knowledge base of ELGPN members on relevant EU policy developments in education, training, employment and social

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inclusion; to gather and analyse data on how such European policies take account of lifelong guidance; and to share that information within the network.

- To support the work programme activities of ELGPN members: to ground the thematic activities of the ELGPN firmly in an EU policy context.
- To assist ELGPN members in influencing European and national policy-makers and processes on the key role of lifelong guidance for their policy fields: to provide alerts to ELGPN members on current processes; to provide advice to help the network members to be involved in the policy processes; and to make the outcomes of the network valued within the European and national policies for education, training, employment and social inclusion.

These tasks are of a transversal nature within ELGPN.

7.3   EU policy development

Public policies relating to social issues – employment, education, equality, healthcare, human services – are areas of national competence. EU action in these areas is based on the principle of subsidiarity, which allows the European Community to act if the objectives cannot be achieved at the Member State level and thus require an action by the EC. However, in order to promote strong convergence in social policy areas, the EU has adopted the Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC) which is respectful of the principle of subsidiarity: it is non-binding and relies mainly on the reforming will of Member States, while allowing measurement of efficiency and effectiveness.

The OMC provides a framework for co-operation between the Member States on the basis of common objectives that national policies can seek to reach. Its components include:

- Definition of common objectives to be achieved (adopted by the Council).
- Guidelines adopted by the Council.
- Timetable.
- Measuring instruments (statistics, indicators).
- Benchmarking, i.e. comparison of the Member States' performance and exchange of best practices (monitored by the Commission).

ELGPN operates within this framework.

The modus operandi of the OMC is as follows:

- The Council of Ministers agrees policy goals and guidelines.
- Specific benchmarks and indicators to measure best practices are developed and agreed.
- Member States then adapt their national and regional policies according to the guidelines and the national context.
- The Member States report on the implementation and results.
- Finally, results are monitored and evaluated: the Member States are evaluated by one another (peer review); the role of Commission is limited to multilateral surveillance.

There are no official sanctions for non-compliance.

However, the application of the OMC can differ significantly across the various policy areas: depending on the areas concerned, the OMC involves so-called "soft law" measures which are binding on the Member States in varying degrees but which never take the form of directives, regulations or decisions.

From proposals of the Commission (in the form of "Communications") and most often in consultation with the EU Presidency, the main policy goals are adopted by the Council within its different configurations (education/research, employment/social policy, etc.) through "soft law" instruments as Conclusions, Resolutions, or Recommendations. Recommendations are adopted both by the Council and by the European Parliament according to the co-decision procedure, which gives them more weight.

In principle, EU policy is developed in the fields of education, training, employment and social inclusion through co-operation that occurs at three levels:

- Level 1 includes the European Commission initiatives in policy development by proposing policy changes to Member States through Communications (staff working papers) often preceded by EU-wide consultation of stakeholders, and also through Green and White Papers, Council of Ministers' Resolutions and Conclusions, Recommendations of the European Parliament, and Opinions of the EU Committee of the Regions.
- Level 2 involves the establishment of action programmes and instruments, through decisions and recommendations of the Council (and, after 1997, of the European Parliament); it also includes Expert Groups established to inform the decisions of policy makers.
- Level 3 refers to pilot projects, exchanges and placements, study visits and studies/surveys, usually part-funded by EU programmes.

Level 1 gives political direction; Level 2 consists of an agreed programme of activities aimed at making Level 1 decisions operational with financial support and/or to inform policy development, and Level 3 are practitioner-, researcher- and manager-level activities that may or may not be related to Levels 1 and 2, though ideally contributing to them. ELGPN itself is situated at Level 2, as an operational instrument of Level 1 (the Council Resolutions of 2004 and more specifically of 2008 which gave ELGPN its current mandate).

Level 1 Council decisions are preceded by discussions and prior agreement at committee meetings of the representatives of the Member States. In the field of education and training, the most important committees are:

- The Education Committee. This committee considers policy developments for all levels and areas of education and training and also relevant policy documents from the fields of employment and social inclusion that are referred to it. Its participants are ministry officials and EU Commission and Council staff.
- The Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (ACVT). This committee gives advice on policy developments related to VET and CVET. Its participants are ministry officials, EU and Member States' social partners, and Commission staff;
- The Directors General for Vocational Training (DGVT). This committee also considers policy developments for VET and CVET. Its participants are ministry officials, EU social partners, and Commission staff.
- The Directors General for Higher Education. This committee considers policy developments for higher education.
- The High Level Group meetings. These prepare the thematic content of the forthcoming Presidencies.

In the field of employment and social policy, the following committees deliberate EU policy developments:

- The Employment Committee (EMCO).
- The Social Protection Committee (SPC).
- The Heads of the Public Employment Services Committee.
- The Assistant Heads of the Public Employment Services Committee.

Level 1 EU Parliament recommendations and opinions are preceded by discussion of the Culture and Education Committee for all areas of education and youth policy; and by the Employment and Social Affairs Committee for areas of employment, social policy, and vocational training, including relations with Cedefop and ETF. The Council and the Commission participate in such discussions as appropriate. Increasingly, joint recommendations of the

Council and Parliament are adopted: for example, on the European Qualifications Framework, ECVET and the European Quality Framework for education and vocational training.

For Level 1 decisions of the EU Committee of the Regions, the adoption of Opinions and Resolutions is preceded by discussions of its commissions. The Commission for Education, Youth, Culture and Research (EDUC) covers the fields indicated by its title; the Commission for Economic and Social Policy covers the fields of employment and social inclusion.

At European Commission level, DG Education and Culture support EU policy developments in education and training; DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities support policy developments for employment and social inclusion.

7.4 The broader policy context

A. The Lisbon Strategy 2000-10

The Lisbon Strategy forms the broad policy context in which the ELGPN was established. Focusing on the knowledge society and economy, social cohesiveness, and global competitiveness, the Lisbon Strategy has led the first decade of this millennium in terms of European-wide reflections on and reforms of national policies for education, training, employment and social inclusion. As the reform strategy has unfolded, reference to lifelong guidance provision has become more explicit, as indeed have agreements for a reform agenda for lifelong guidance policies and systems themselves (Council Resolutions on Lifelong Guidance, 2004, 2008). The European Employment Strategy (1995–2005), the Commission's Communication on Lifelong Learning (2001), the Council Resolution on Lifelong Learning (2002), the Concrete Future Objectives of Education and Training Systems (2002), the Copenhagen Process on EU co-operation on VET (2002 and subsequent Communiqués) all made specific reference to how career guidance can assist in the achievement of

the reform objectives. The European Social Partners (2002) acknowledged for the first time the importance of information and guidance to develop the competences and qualifications of the workforce.

In the renewal of the Lisbon Strategy in 2005, the European Council emphasised the optimisation of human capital, especially through lifelong learning, with particular attention to be paid to lifelong guidance. The Recommendation of the European Parliament and Council (2006) on key competences for lifelong learning made reference to guidance as part of the "learning to learn" competence.

The end of 2008–10 cycle of the Lisbon Strategy has coincided with the economic downturn. Since then, financial crisis has focused attention on reducing its economic and social impact. Two future goals were defined:

- Better combining flexibility with security, through the new concept of "flexicurity". In 2007, flexicurity became a cornerstone of EU employment policies for workforce adaptability, development and employability, with special reference to lifelong learning. Flexicurity policies are intended to support citizen work transitions, and highlight the role of the national Public Employment Services and the social partners in such support and in skills needs identification and anticipation.
- Better anticipating skill needs through the New Skills for New Jobs initiative. The awareness of the need for better anticipation and matching of labour market skills appears in most of the documents pertaining to education and employment proposed by the Commission and adopted by the Council since 2007 (Council Resolution on "New Skills for New Jobs" of 15 November 2007[39] and Conclusions of the European Council of March 2008). The role of guidance is clearly underlined: to support job-

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[39] Council Resolution of 15 November 2007. OJ C290, 4.12.2007.

seekers to identify the competences required to move where there are skills gaps.

The Jobs and Skills initiative with special emphasis on youth, launched in 2008, underlines that the mismatch between supply and demand in the labour market is one of the main factors in youth unemployment and highlights the important role of vocational guidance in this context, in particular regarding transitions between education and training and the labour market.[40]

The report of a group of experts on the New Skills for New Jobs initiative (2010) underlined the lack of the right skills in Europe and concluded that "upgrading, adapting, and widening the skills portfolio of individuals", making people "shift from job seekers to job shapers" and "being able to make better-informed choices" should be ambitions for the future.

Guidance has not been explicitly referenced in EU social and youth policies, though the challenges outlined in their policy papers, such as early school-leaving, job insecurity, and youth transitions, of their nature attract and demand a guidance response.

B.   Europe 2020: the post-Lisbon strategy

Europe 2020 is the successor to the Lisbon Strategy and has the challenge of proposing the EU's response to the fall-out of the economic and financial crises, globally provoked but with EU and national responsibility. The Communication of the Commission (2010) sets down three strategic policy directions/ priority areas to re-invigorate economic growth:

- *Smart* growth – developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation.

- *Sustainable* growth – promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy.
- *Inclusive* growth – fostering a high-employment economy delivering economic, social and territorial cohesion.

These three priorities constitute the policy-framework of European co-operation in the fields of economy, employment, education and training, research and social inclusion for the next ten years. They will also be the political basis for the further financial perspectives from 2013 to 2018, with effects on the Lifelong Learning programme and the cohesion policies (structural funds and particularly, the European Social Fund).

Each priority area has several Flagship Initiatives. Under "Smart Growth", three Flagship Initiatives are proposed:

- Innovation Union.
- Youth on the Move.
- A Digital Agenda for Europe.

The second of these makes explicit reference to career guidance provision to support youth entry to the labour market. In addition, the first, in order to be achieved, demands career guidance support.

Under "Sustainable Growth", two Flagship Initiatives are proposed:

- Resource Efficient Europe.
- An Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era.

It is difficult to visualise how the first of these, which refers to "a quick redeployment of skills" to emerging high-growth sectors and markets, can be achieved without lifelong guidance support.

Under "Inclusive Growth", two Flagship Initiatives are proposed:

- Agenda for New Skills for New Jobs.
- European Platform against Poverty.

TG1

While lifelong guidance is not explicitly referenced in either of those initiatives, the Skills Agenda clearly implies easy access to a range of guidance services, quality assurance in lifelong guidance provision, the co-ordination of the various services, and the active role of citizens through the acquisition of career management skills. This has already been acknowledged explicitly by the Expert Group on New Skills for New Jobs (2010).

C. The Strategic Framework for European Co-operation in Education and Training

The Council Conclusions of 12 May 2009 set down a strategic framework for European co-operation in education and training ("E&T 2020"), intended to address four strategic objectives for the period up to 2020 corresponding to the long-term goals of the Lisbon Strategy:

- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality.
- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training.
- Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship.
- Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship at all levels of education and training.

Guidance is explicitly included in the first strategic objective and implicitly referred in the three others through the "acquisition of key competences by everyone" (Objective 2), "the update and development over a lifetime of job-specific skills" (Objective 3), and the acquisition by all citizens of transversal key competences, such …as learning to learn, a sense of initiative" (Objective 4).

A new way of working is proposed: the period up to 2020 will be divided up into a series of cycles, with the first cycle covering the three years from 2009 to 2011. The European priority areas will be designed to allow either for broad co-operation between all the Member States or for closer co-operation between a more limited number of Member States, in accordance with national priorities.

The E&T 2020 priority areas during the first cycle 2009-11 are particularly relevant to guidance: validation of non-formal and informal learning, guidance, expanding learning mobility, and developing partnerships between education/training institutions and business area. During this first cycle, it is proposed to work on:

- Lifelong learning strategies paying particular attention to guidance (Objective 1).
- European Qualifications Framework (Objective 1).
- Professional development of teachers and trainers (focus on the quality of initial education and early career support for new teachers and on raising the quality of continuing professional development opportunities for teachers, trainers and other educational staff, e.g. those involved in leadership or guidance activities) (Objective 2).
- "Governance and funding", including "modernisation of higher education (curricula), develop the quality of provision, including staffing, in the adult learning sector (Objective 2).
- Early leavers: strengthening preventive approaches (Objective 3).
- Transversal key competences in curricula, assessment and qualifications (Objective 4).

It is further proposed to develop co-operation on:

- Expanding learning mobility (Objective 1).
- "New skills for new jobs", "learners with special needs" (Objective 2).
- "Promoting creativity and innovation" by developing specific teaching and learning methods including teacher training.

D.   Sector approaches

In **adult learning**, the Commission launched Action Plans through two Communications: *It is Never too Late to Learn* (October 2006)[41] and *It is Always a Good Time to Learn* (September 2007)[42] which highlight the importance of adult learning and call on member states to remove barriers to participation, to increase overall quality and efficiency in adult learning. The Adult Learning Group will consider the issue of lifelong guidance support and hold a thematic workshop on the acquisition and maintenance of career management skills.

In the **vocational education and training (VET)** sector, two important tools, ECVET and the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQARF), were launched in November 2009. They constitute the complement of the European Qualification Framework (EQF). These European reference tools aim at increasing transparency, mobility and at promoting mutual trust between the European VET systems.

The European Qualification Framework (EQF)[43] is a common European reference system, which enables different national qualification systems to be linked. To this end, it uses 8 reference levels based on learning outcomes, defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences.

The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)[44] is a technical framework for the transfer, recognition and accumulation of individuals' learning outcomes with a view to achieving a qualification. It uses the same basis as EQF: learning outcomes defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence. The focus on learning outcomes is very relevant to responding to the needs of the labour market and to facilitating the recognition and validation /certification of informal and non-formal learning.

Implementing these EU reference tools for education and training has implications for lifelong guidance provision to support citizens' learning and work pathways.

In the **higher education (HE)** sector, a new roadmap, the Communiqué *The Bologna Process 2020 – The European Higher Education Area in the New Decade*[45] was adopted by the Ministers of Education in April 2009. It established the following priorities:

- Quality assurance.
- Equitable access and completion.
- Lifelong learning and development of European Qualification Framework.
- Employability.
- Student-centred learning and the teaching mission of Higher Education.
- Mobility.
- Data collection.

In their consideration of the implementation of national lifelong learning strategies, the newly established Expert Group on Lifelong Learning will take into account the Council Resolution of 2008 on how to better integrate lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies.

7.5   Integrating the work of ELGPN into EU policy developments

It is suggested that, while keeping a transversal overview, a sector approach be adopted in the next stage of the ELGPN work programme. The choice of future ELGPN work themes should take into account both the EU 2020 and ET 2020 priorities.

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[41]   Commission Communication (October 2006). Doc.14600/06, COM(2006) 614 final.

[42]   Commission Communication (September 2007). Doc.13426/07, COM(2007) 558 final

[43]   Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (2008/C 111/01).

[44]   Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) (2009/C 155/02).

[45]   Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 2009.

TG1

A. Education and training policies

In the fields of education and training, ELGPN should add a sector lens to its analysis, and reflect on and think through the relevance and application of the results to date of each WP to each sector of education and training (second-level, higher education/Bologna, VET including CVET, and adult). Particular attention should be paid to:

- The youth sector: to additionally support early school leavers; to ensure a sufficient supply of science, maths and engineering graduates; and to focus school curricula on creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship.
- The adult learning sector, and in the Initiative "An agenda for new skills and jobs": the theme of career management skills development for adults at the workplace, in particular, regarding career planning through self exploration as well as exploration of work & training, needs attention from ELGPN work. The role of trade unions and employers' organisations in informing and advising their members and within the enterprises, and the needs of enterprises and employers in terms of information and guidance should be analysed.
- There should be a stronger focus on the role of guidance and counselling in APEL and validation of qualifications acquired through informal and non-formal learning.
- In the VET sector, the new EU mobility tools, the European Qualifications Framework and ECVET should be taken into account regarding the specific nature of guidance/counselling support required in partnership with the Commission's ECVET Working Group.
- The issue of guidance in higher education (HE) should be attended to, through the angle of continuity of career management skills development between secondary education and HE, transition between VET and higher education,

access (specific information), co-ordination, quality, and counsellors' initial and continuing training.

At European level, the ELGPN should make connections in a co-ordinated way with the education and training sectors, especially through the formal channels such as the EU Committees and ET 2020 Working Groups that exist or will be set up for each sector, and with the Heads of Unit for each sector area at DG EAC, plus relevant European platforms and associations. The aim should be to create awareness, to inform and to influence EU policy developments in the sectors using the outcomes of the 2008–10 ELGPN work programme, thus ensuring the external value and pertinence of ELGPN's work to each sector.

The ELGPN outcomes should be of particular interest for the ET 2020 groups on:

- Professional development of teachers and trainers.
- Quality of provision in adult learning sector including staffing.
- Early leavers, learners with special needs.
- Transversal key competences in curricula, assessment and qualifications.
- Promote creativity and innovation by developing specific teaching and learning methods including teacher training.

The ELGPN interesting practices could be a basis for "establishing platforms and peer learning activities".

At national level, ELGPN members can identify the national representatives/correspondents on the EU sector committees and expert groups, again with similar aims: to make the 2008–10 ELGPN deliberations and results valued within EU and national policies through awareness raising and information provision, with the additional aim of influencing policy development.

B.   Employment and social inclusion policies

The role of the PES, of the employers and of trade union/worker representatives as well as the overarching frameworks such as the Integrated Guidelines, the flexicurity policy, and the New Skills and New Jobs initiative, are the key policy targets related to lifelong guidance.

Particular attention should be paid, within that initiative, to the development of *A common language and operational tool for education/training and work: a European Skills, Competences and Occupations framework (ESCO)*, and to the potential development of profiles for green jobs.

At European level, the ELGPN should make connections in a co-ordinated way with employment and social policy developments, especially through the formal channels such as the Employment Committee, the PES Network and/or Expert Groups that exist for the employment sector, the Heads of relevant Policy Units at DG EMPL, with representatives of the European Social Partners, and with relevant European Platforms/associations.

Outcomes of the WPs could feed into the PES Network and employment policy issues: for example, on ICT issues for access to lifelong guidance, career management skills for adults and unemployed people, competences of counsellors, and concrete co-operation/co-ordination of career guidance services, particularly in supporting lifelong learning components of flexicurity policies, evidence-based policy and quality indicators.

In the employment and social affairs policy fields, ELGPN members should make contact at national level with the national representatives/correspondents/ policy-makers on the relevant EU committees and expert groups, again with similar aims: to create awareness of the work of ELGPN, to inform, and to influence policy development.

7.6   Conclusions

ELGPN members need to be cognisant of the EU policy context of which their reflections form a part, to help to shape those policies in the future, and to make relevant contributions to support such policies. The ELGPN work on lifelong guidance policies in the next phase should be clearly situated in the context of EU 2020 and the EU policy in education, training, employment, in order to make the outcomes of the network valued within the European policies.

TG1

Synergies between EU-funded projects and their links to policy (TG2)[46]

8.1 Context

Within the framework of the European Union, a large number of projects has been funded which have had a considerable impact on the delivery of lifelong guidance provision in EU member-states.

Currently, many of these projects in the field of education and training are being undertaken within the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007–13). This comprises:

- Four sectoral programmes, focusing on school education (Comenius), higher education (Erasmus), vocational training (Leonardo da Vinci) and adult learning (Grundtvig).
- A transversal programme targeted on cross-sectoral areas (policy co-operation and innovation in lifelong learning, languages, development of innovative ICT, dissemination and exploitation of results).

- A programme to support teaching, research and reflection on European integration and key European institutions and associations (Jean Monnet Programme).

Some of these are continuations of previous programmes. Information sources about guidance-related projects within these programmes are listed in Annex A.

In addition, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities finances a few projects each year. In the past, the relevant financial programme was called Employment Innovation Measures; it has recently been renamed Progress. The number of projects financed by DG Employment is much lower than in the Lifelong Learning Programme. Projects are focused on specific topics related to the public employment services, and these sometimes include guidance. In some cases, guidance is just one of a number of elements of the project. Most are national projects with some transnational elements. Some examples of relevant projects are listed in Annex B.

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[46] This chapter is a team effort of the ELGPN Task Group 2 on synergies between EU-funded LLG projects. The text has been prepared by Mr. Sasa Niklanovic, based on the contributions and reflections from the participating countries: AT, CZ, DK, EL, PL, SI. Ms. Brigita Rupar (Slovenia) supported the process as the TG2 lead-country representative.

Other guidance-related projects are funded by the European Social Fund. These are usually national projects which include EU co-funding. Most are related to employment and social inclusion. ESF projects are selected and financed at the level of individual EU member-states and no common EU database of ESF projects exists. Information on these projects can be obtained from relevant national institutions.

Projects can thus be divided into three broad categories in terms of their *level of transnationality*:

- Transnational projects.
- National projects with transnational elements.
- National projects which are co-funded by the EU.

Projects can also be divided into a number of categories in terms of their *main focus:*

- Pilot projects.
- Transfer of innovations.
- Dissemination projects.
- Networks (e.g. Comenius, Grundtvig).
- Research & development.

In terms of their *relationship to guidance,* they can be divided into:

- Guidance-focused projects.
- Broader projects with guidance elements.
- Projects on related concepts (e.g. mentoring, coaching, entrepreneurship).
- Other projects with implications for guidance (e.g. VET reforms).

8.2 Rationale

There is a strong and widely-shared belief that the benefits and impact of EU-funded projects could be greatly enhanced by:

- Minimising overlap between projects.
- Strengthening links with policy.
- Encouraging the longer-term impact of projects, after the funding ends.

Accordingly, growing importance is being attached to achieving enhanced value from such projects, in two main ways:

- By establishing synergies with other related projects.
- By giving increased attention to 'exploitation': i.e. seeking changes in policies and practices based on the project's work. This is in addition to the traditional emphasis on dissemination – transmitting information about the project and its outputs – and effectively gives such dissemination an outcome-related edge.

In terms of *synergies* with other EU-funded projects, a distinction can be drawn between three possible levels of such links:

- Cross-referencing – where each project demonstrates awareness of the other and refers to it where appropriate.
- Co-operation – where the project agree to take account of each other's outputs.
- Cross-fertilisation – where the projects seek to influence each other's conceptual thinking and to reach a common position on key conceptual issues.

Co-operation is likely to require a letter of agreement; cross-fertilisation is likely to need a joint statement of some kind.

'*Exploitation*' in principle addresses two distinct issues:

- Sustainability: ensuring that the work of the project can be sustained in the partner countries beyond the project's life.

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- Transferability: ensuring that the benefits of the project can be transferred to other European countries.

On sustainability, a further distinction can be drawn between:

- Maintenance: sustaining the provision trialled in the project.
- Multiplication: ensuring that the work of the project is adopted by other providers.
- Mainstreaming: ensuring that the work of the project is reflected in relevant structures (professional standards, accreditation structures, etc.).

These issues are reframed somewhat in the case of national projects supported by EU funding. With such projects, the issues related to synergy and transferability are less important, but those related to sustainability are especially significant. There is a risk that when the EU funding comes to an end, the initiatives are not sustained.

8.3 Relationship with EU 2008 Resolution priorities

One of the challenges for Task Group 2 was to examine how guidance projects can be linked to the four priorities of the Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance services into lifelong learning strategies (2008). Members analysed eighteen guidance projects and linked them with the four priorities. These exercises indicated that:

- In few cases, a project (or projects) can be simply linked to one of the priorities of the Resolution. For example, two Joint Actions projects initiated the establishment of national forums in some EU member-states: these can be simply categorised as projects which support the policy goals set out in the fourth priority area of the Resolution ("Encourage co-ordi-

nation and co-operation among the various national, regional and local stakeholders").

- In most cases, a project can be linked to more than one priority. Usually it is possible to say which priority is more relevant than others. The relative intensity of the links can be presented graphically. The diagram below shows an example of a project which was carried out in partnership between different national institutions. Members of Task Group 2 agreed that its most important benefit was to contribute to better access to career information (priority 2), but that it also strengthened co-operation between policy makers (priority 4) and contributed to better quality of career information (priority 3).
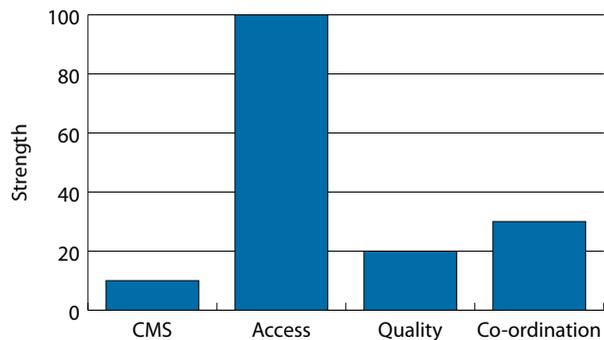
Figure 2: *Relative intensity of links between a sample guidance project and the four priorities of the 2008 Council Resolution*

Examples of projects with strong links to particular priorities are:

Priority 1: Career management skills
- The Integrated Counselling, Training and Employment Method (ICTEM) project was a Leonardo project involving partners in Ireland, Italy, Slovenia and the UK. It was designed to develop methods of working with unemployed young people without any vocational qualification. It included a definition of the career management skills that it was seeking to develop (http://en.kadis.si/index.php?menu_item=item_10357).

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- The Comenius project on Schools and the World of Work (http://comenius.stvg.at/) had partners in 12 countries. Its aim was to provide effective, smooth and sustainable transitions for young people. It paid some attention to career management skills as part of this work.

Priority 2: Access

- Ploigos is the national database of learning opportunities in Greece, created by the National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance (EKEP) in the context of Ploteus II (Portal on Learning Opportunities throughout the European Space). Ploigos provides information to a broad range of target groups (students at all education levels, their parents, graduates interested in postgraduate studies, teachers, counsellors, European citizens interested in studying in Greece, etc.) about learning opportunities and training possibilities available in Greece at all educational levels (pre-primary, primary, secondary, post-secondary, higher education, postgraduate studies) and all types of education (general, vocational, special). The project has been jointly financed by the Ministry of Education and by the European Social Fund. Ploigos is accessible both through the website of EKEP (www.ekep.gr) and through the portal of Ploteus II http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/

- The Open Access Prototype project is co-funded by the EU Commission under the Employment Incentive Measures and by its four partners: FÁS Ireland, AMS Denmark, AMS Sweden and VDAB Belgium. It is designed to develop innovative guidance solutions for both jobseeker and employer services. The end-product is a prototype which integrates new technologies, designed to increase the reach and accessibility of PES services through virtual ICT channels. The prototype will also include new ergonomically designed multi-media tools and a work-station for a range of jobseekers with particular needs. The project was completed in 2009 and the complete suite of software and prototype designs is available to all EU/EEA public employment services. See: http://www.openaccessproject.ie/index.asp

Priority 3: Quality and evidence base

- AQOR (Amélioration de la Qualité de l'Orientation) was a Leonardo da Vinci project which ran from 2007 to 2009. Its main aim was to develop an auto-evaluation system of guidance services, tools, products and networks for use by guidance providers. Project partners were encouraged to consider how to involve users/potential users in developing a meaningful set of indicators for both providers and users. The project built on the previous Leonardo project DROA (Développement des Réseaux pour l'Orientation Active). AQOR defined four groups of quality indicators: (1) service delivery principles; (2) policy and planning; (3) delivery; and (4) networking. See: http://www.aqor.droa-eu.org/

- QUALITY (Quality Standards for Adult Guidance in Education) was an earlier Leonardo project designed to develop quality-assurance standards for the adult guidance sector in four countries (Estonia, Iceland, Ireland, Slovakia) where such standards had not existed previously (http://www.pro-orava.sk/aktivity/kvalita/dole.htm).

Priority 4: Co-operation and co-ordination

- Under the Joint Actions programme for 2004-06, emerging national co-ordination mechanisms in 12 countries engaged in various forms of collaboration and sharing of good practice. This programme had a significant impact in several countries in encouraging the establishment of lifelong guidance forums where they had not previously existed.

- In Finland, use has been made of ESF funding to support the integrative use of ICT in managing regional co-operation, and in supporting

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the national cross-sectoral development plan for adult guidance 2007-13 (http://www.opi-novi.fi/).

their homes and through kiosks in public centres, is training practitioners using the ICT Skills 2 competence framework, self-assessment tool, e-portfolio and e-learning platform.

8.4 Case studies

In this section, we present three case studies in relation to some of the principles outlined in Section 2 above.

The first (Box 1) is an example of a project which established strong synergies with four related projects.

The second (Box 2) is a strong example of dissemination and 'exploitation'.

Box 1: ICT Skills 2

The aim of the ICT Skills 2 project was to develop innovative ICT-based training and tools for guidance practitioners. Managed by ASTER in Italy, its project partners were from Italy, Romania, Spain and the UK. It established close working links with:

- The EAS (European Accreditation Scheme for Career Guidance Practitioners) project (see www.corep.it/eas/home.htm). One of the competences developed by this project was 'use ICT for guidance purposes'. The assessment framework developed by the ICT Skills 2 training programmes was linked to this competence.
- The competence framework proposed in the Cedefop study *Professionalising Career Guidance: Practitioner Competences and Qualification Routes in Europe* (2009) has been applied to designing the ICT Skills 2 framework (see http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/5193_en.pdf).
- The ECGC (European Career Guidance Certificate) project (see www.ecgc.at). This built upon the work of ICT Skills 2.
- The eGOS (e-Guidance and e-Government Services) project (2008-11) funded under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme. This project, designed to provide e-guidance to all-age clients over the internet in

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Box 2: Workplace Guidance (vocational guidance for low-paid workers)

The aim of this project was to assist low-paid workers into lifelong learning through the provision of vocational guidance that was easy for them to access, i.e. at the workplace. The project highlighted good practice, and also provided 100 hours' training to vocational guidance counsellors, human resource workers and trade-union activists in order to highlight the value of, and assist with the provision of, guidance to lower-paid workers. The outreach guidance components of the Workplace Guidance project were transformed into mainstream national guidance policies. Thus the concepts of Learning Advisers and of Guidance Corners were implemented in Iceland on the basis of the Danish experiences in the project, so incorporating the concept of Workplace Guidance into the nine Lifelong Learning/Lifelong Guidance Centres all over Iceland. In both Denmark and Iceland, the Workplace Guidance project played an active role in contributing and influencing adult learning and adult guidance policies.

See: project website (http://www.gla.ac.uk/wg/) and ELGPN database (http://www.elgpndb/search/directory/view/10).

The third example (Box 3) relates to the strategic use of projects for system development.

Box 3: Strategic use of EU-funded projects for system development in Austria

EU-funded projects are viewed in Austria as an integrated part of a proactive process to initiate and implement policies and strategies for lifelong guidance as an integral part of lifelong learning. One of the core tasks of the National Lifelong Guidance Forum (NLLGF-AT) is to identify programmes and calls for tender that can offer opportunities for innovative activities related to the aims and objectives of the national lifelong guidance strategy. The Joint Actions project "European Guidance Forums" provided a strong support for the establishment of NLLGF-AT. Subsequently, the Comenius network on "School and the World of Work", the Leonardo project on "Entrepreneurship Education", and guidance-related projects in the transversal programme "Cross-Border Improvement of National Lifelong Learning Strategies", have all had a strong impact at national level.

In addition, the national strategy regarding the European Social Fund has been used to fund projects, developments and measures at national, regional and local levels in relation to youth, adults, and target groups with special needs in an integrated and strategic way. The Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has committed additional resources for co-financing of those projects which fit the aims and objectives of the national lifelong learning and lifelong guidance strategies.

The NLLGF-AT has an overview of current and forthcoming projects, which makes it possible to invite potential projects co-ordinators in developing their proposals and to encourage co-operation and co-ordination between various projects within a common "cluster" concept, linking the common aims and objectives at national, regional and local levels with European policies, programmes and priorities.

See: http://www.lifelongguidance.at/qip/mm.nsf

8.5   Recommendations

In the light of examining these and other examples, Task Group 2 proposes four sets of suggestions addressed to different stakeholder groups, which they are invited to consider.

The first set of recommendations is addressed to project commissioners, both at EU level (the Commission and its executive agencies) and at national level:

- Project commissioners should strive to prevent "reinventing of wheels" by developing effective procedures to avoid overlapping between projects.
- Project co-ordinators (promoters) should be required to demonstrate that they are familiar with previous similar projects and to indicate the ways in which they are building on the experience of these projects.
- They should be encouraged to demonstrate how links to relevant policies are built in to the methodology of the projects.
- These policy links should, where possible, be explicitly linked to the four priorities of the 2008 Resolution.
- Priority should be given to projects that meet these criteria.
- Supports should be provided to assist potential project promoters, including access to examples of good practice (e.g. through a database or manual).

The second set of recommendations is addressed to national guidance forums (where these exist):

- National forums should adopt a proactive role in linking projects to national policies and priorities.
- Where appropriate, this should include encouraging relevant ministries to provide co-funding for the national contribution to projects which meet national priorities.

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- They should also adopt a proactive role in encouraging synergies between projects.

The third set of recommendations is addressed to the network of Euroguidance centres. It is recognised that the structures and roles of these centres vary across countries. However, it is suggested that Euroguidance centres should work closely with the ELGPN to:

- Maintain a database of national guidance projects (including EU-funded projects) and of transnational guidance projects including partners from their country. This should be part of a common database on policy and practice related to lifelong guidance.
- Promote successful projects (good practices) to policy-makers, stakeholders and other relevant audiences through national guidance forums where they exist and through the existing Euroguidance communication channels (websites, conferences, publications) or additional ones.

- Engage in a broadly based reflection process to suggest ways in which the impact of completed projects can be supported after they have ended.

The final set of recommendations is addressed to those responsible for managing relevant projects:

- Project co-ordinators should involve relevant stakeholders not just when bidding for the project but in its implementation.
- Attention to synergies with other projects should be given not just at the application stage, but throughout the project's life. This should include attention to the possibility of working in clusters of projects, i.e. formal co-operation between projects on similar topics.
- Similarly, issues related to the dissemination and exploitation of the project's outcomes should be addressed not just at the end of the project, but throughout the project's life, involving all relevant stakeholders in this process.

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Towards Common European Reference Tools for Lifelong Guidance[47]

This paper provides a general context to the development of common reference tools for lifelong guidance and to propose ways forward for such development in the next phase of the ELGPN work programme. It draws on discussions at the ELGPN Steering Group meetings in Berlin, Luxembourg, Paris and Riga, on the results of the survey of ELGPN members in summer 2009, on a discussion paper presented at the Riga meeting, and on the results of the discussion of the Plenary Meeting in Riga.

9.1 Policy context

Within the context the European Education and Training programmes (2010, 2020) for the reform of education and training systems in Europe to support the achievement of the Lisbon goals, Member States and the Commission agreed to develop common European reference tools, benchmarks and indica-

tors. The aim of such tools was to assist national policy development (Joint Report of the Council and the Commission to the European Council, March 2004). They were to be used for policy and systems development at national, regional and local levels (Maastricht Communiqué, December 2004), and for policy learning purposes in peer learning activities at European level.

European peer learning as evidenced through the ELGPN activities consists of comparing and contrasting diverse approaches to specific aspects of policy and systems development as set down in the Council Resolutions (2004, 2008) and to promote future co-operation to enhance such learning. The intention is not to judge national or regional approaches with a view to pronouncing one better than another. Given the varied stages of development of policies and systems within and across Member States, their different circumstances and traditions, and the specific challenges they face, it is well nigh impossible for a particular approach to be directly transferable from one country to another. Peer learning aims to stimulate national and European reflection and enable participants to draw inspiration from the experiences of other countries which may have found interesting

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solutions to similar problems, and to plan further learning. Common European Reference Tools are one means of supporting peer learning and reflection by making national policies and systems more transparent and understandable across countries and within the countries themselves.

Common European Reference Tools take many shapes and forms. The European Qualifications Framework, the Quality Assurance Framework for VET, ECVET, ECTS, Europass, and the European Framework for Lifelong Learning Competences, are well-known examples from the fields of education and training. These tools are the outcome of consultations at European level between ministry officials, the European Commission and other relevant actors, and based on national consultation. The Common Reference Tools for lifelong guidance policies and systems were developed by the European Commission's Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance in the period 2002 to 2004 to support the reform of national policies and systems as part of the EU Education and Training 2010 programme.

EU governments committed themselves in 2004 and 2008 to develop lifelong guidance policies and systems to support lifelong learning. Lifelong learning is also a pillar of EU employment policies, including flexicurity. There is consensus on the challenges facing countries. The common European reference tools for lifelong guidance are intended to help Member States to improve and modernise their national policies and systems for lifelong guidance through self-assessment and self-development at national level, and through peer learning at EU level. If the tools are used in this way, they will support the implementation of the 2004 and 2008 Council Resolutions on guidance throughout life, which invited Member States to review their guidance provision, especially with a view to:

- Developing high-quality accessible services.
- Enabling citizens to acquire the skills to manage their learning and work life-paths.
- Improving quality-assurance mechanisms.

- Strengthening structures for policy and systems development at national and regional levels.

9.2 ELGPN approach to Common Reference Tools for Lifelong Guidance

The ELGPN Steering Group at its meeting in Berlin on 14 January 2009 noted the proposal from WP4 that each WP should try to produce at least three meta-indicators in a descriptive form so that the EU could have a common reference tool for comparability of policies and systems for lifelong guidance (minutes, para.6.4). The need for a decision on this was noted by the Steering Group at its meeting in Luxembourg on 18 March 2009 (para.24).

The ELGPN Steering Group subsequently agreed at its meeting in Paris on 14 June 2009 that it would be helpful if information could be collected on how the existing EU Common Reference Tools and EC/OECD Handbook for Policy Makers on lifelong career guidance have been used in the ELGPN member countries, and if this information could be shared at the ELGPN Plenary Meeting to be held in Riga on 17–18 September 2009. This could then provide a basis for:

- Considering revisions of the current Common Reference Tools (Common Aims and Principles for Lifelong Guidance, Common Reference Points for Quality Assurance Systems for Lifelong Guidance, Key Features of a Lifelong Guidance System).[48]
- The development of a new tool to reflect current political realities (Council Resolutions 2004, 2008) as an output from the current phase of ELGPN activities.

Information was collected in summer 2009 on the use made to date of the existing Common Reference

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[48] Published by Cedefop in 2005. Available in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

Tools and of the EC/OECD policy manual. Members were asked whether some revisions or extensions of these tools should take place as an output from the current phase of ELGPN activities. The responses of 23 of the member States were as follows:

- The existing Common Reference Tools have been translated into the national language in a number of countries (e.g. DK, EL, ES, FI, LT, LV, PL, SI, SW, TR).

- In some countries, they seem so far to have been viewed as a tool for practitioners rather than policy-makers (e.g. DE, DK, ES, IC).

- In some countries, however, they have been used in a systematic way at policy level.

The latter included:

- Usage as key tools by national guidance forums in developing their work (e.g. AU, IE, LU).

- Usage in studies or reviews of national guidance systems (e.g. NL, SI).

- Usage in the development of national quality standards (e.g. EE, EL, FI, IE).

- Usage in project activities, and in inspiration and validation of new developments (e.g. FI, LV).

- Usage in some regional activities (e.g. NO).

Most (though not all) countries indicated that they would welcome revisions or extensions of the current tools as an output from the current phase of ELGPN activities. Specific suggestions included:

- Describing career management skills development (e.g. LT).

- Additions on ICT related to access (e.g. TR).

- Steps in developing a national forum (e.g. ES).

- Describing the evidence base needed for policy and practice development (e.g. LT).

- Criteria for output/outcome evaluation (e.g. FR).

- EU-level indicators for measuring guidance activities, for use at Eurostat level (e.g. HU).

- More elaborated versions of the meta-criteria on quality and the key features of a lifelong guidance system.

- Common agreed European framework for quality-assurance development in guidance (e.g. DE).

- Common quality indicators and benchmarks, including a monitoring system (e.g. DE).

Other suggestions included:

- Producing shortened or simplified versions of the tools (e.g. AU, SI)

- Providing support or advice in using the tools (e.g. IS, UK).

- Producing case-studies of ways in which the tools have been used (e.g. IE, UK).

- Supplementing the tools with example of good practice (e.g. LV).

In summary, the existing Common Reference Tools have been used for policy and systems development by Member States, mainly for national review and strategy development. Suggested revisions focus on quality, and on measurement and evaluation issues. Member States also proposed a simplified presentation of the existing tools including with case studies and guidance on how to use them.

Contemporaneous with and independent of this survey, a prototype of a new reference tool was drafted by the Co-ordinator with the help of experts to take into account the new political realities of the 2004 and 2008 Council Resolutions and the need for meta-indicators identified by WP4, endorsed by the Steering Committee. The existing Common Reference Tools for lifelong guidance predate the two Council Resolutions (2004, 2008) and the establishment of the ELGPN. A new instrument was needed to capture the new priorities and Member States experience related to them, working towards a meta-indicators approach suggested by WP4.

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The prototype was structured in four sections corresponding to the Council Resolution (2008) priorities and to the ELGPN Work Packages. Each section had a brief rationale and objective, related to the Council Resolution.

Based on a reading of the Council Resolution 2008 and of all the documents issuing from the WPs, key policy- and systems-related factors/reference points were identified to assist reflection on, and to compare and contrast, the experiences of Member States. Thus in Section 1 (national co-ordination and co-operation mechanisms) the following themes were selected:

- Policy partnership.
- Policy support resources.
- Policy elaboration process.
- Monitoring and evaluation.
- Exchange of good practice.

For each of those themes five sets of statements were developed, using the term "level" to distinguish the different policy development process points at which Member States are currently situated.

Section 2 concerned career management skills acquisition. The following themes were selected:

- Organisation/delivery.
- Learning environment.
- Monitoring and evaluation.

Widening access was covered in Section 3 according to the following themes:

- Access analysis.
- Promoting access.
- Extending access through diversified delivery.

Quality assurance and evidence base were covered in Section 4, to cover:

- Quality assurance policy.
- Quality assurance practice.
- Evidence base.

At the 12th Steering Group meeting in Riga, the prototype was welcomed in principle, but it was agreed that it required revision both in general terms (dropping the use of numerical levels) and in its specific content and wording (which should be decided by each WP). At the subsequent ELGPN Plenary Meeting, it was agreed that revision of the existing common reference tools and the elaboration of further new tools should be deferred to the next phase of the ELGPN work programme. The development of the tools might then lead to testing them through structured peer review processes in countries that wished to initiate such processes. The Plenary Meeting concluded that these possibilities should be discussed in more detail at the next ELGPN Plenary Meeting in Zaragoza.

9.3 Choices for the next phase of ELGPN's work programme

From the results of the survey and from the discussions at the Steering Group and Plenary Meetings, there is consensus that common EU reference tools for LLG have been useful. But since a number of Member States have not yet used them either as a national exercise or as part of a European peer learning activity, that consensus is in some cases more aspirational than concrete. From the survey it is clear that members need more and better guidance on how to use the existing tools. In addition, without knowing the content of the prototype, members identified independently the areas of quality, evaluation and measurement as areas for future Common Reference Tools. These are covered in Section 4 of the prototype.

While there is some consensus about the content areas for development (e.g. survey results and the fourth axe of the Council Resolution of 2008), there

is a lack of clarity concerning at what level a new reference tool should be pitched. The idea of meta-indicators fits well for a policy peer learning review, but not all members occupy national policy development roles, and members' comfort level with such an approach may differ according to the roles they occupy. The existing reference tools could be viewed as more delivery-manager- and practitioner-oriented. A meta-indicator approach supporting and capturing policy learning in a peer review context, particularly for comparative analysis of Member States' progress in implementing the 2008 Resolution, is a step up from this – and is at the heart of the remit given to ELGPN by the Council Resolution of 2008.

So choices have to be made. Either:

- Undertake serious revision of the existing tools to bring them to a policy level of meta-indicators.

- Present them in a simplified, more user-friendly way.
- Test these revisions in peer review.

Or:

- Further develop a policy meta-indicator approach (as in the prototype) in the WPs, building on their work to date, to be used as a tool to measure progress in the implementation of the Council Resolution 2008.
- Present it in a simplified, user-friendly way.
- Test it in peer learning reviews.
- Obtain political visibility and endorsement for it.

While it is true that both approaches are valid and in some ways complementary, and in other ways overlapping, ELGPN is likely to be significantly evaluated in terms of its role in supporting the implementation of the priority action areas of the 2008 Resolution.

Annexes

Annexes

Annex 1: Composition of the national delegations and contact points in the ELGPN 2009–10

		Education sector	Ministry of labour or employment	National forum	Euroguidance	Other
Austria	AT	1	1			1
Cyprus	CY	1	2			
Czech Republic	CZ	1	1		1	
Denmark	DK	2		3		
Estonia	EE	1	1	1		
Finland	FI	1	1			1
France	FR	4	1			
Germany	DE	2		1		
Greece	EL	1	1		3	
Hungary	HU	1	1			1
Iceland	IS	1				3
Italy	IT		1		4	
Latvia	LV	2	2			1
Lithuania	LT	1	1			1
Luxembourg	LU	1				3
Malta	MT	2				
Norway	NO	2	1			
Poland	PL	1	2			1
Portugal	PT	1				1
Slovakia	SK	1	1			1
Slovenia	SI	1	3			2
Spain	ES	5				
Sweden	SE	2	1			
The Netherlands	NL	1	1		2	
Turkey	TR	3				
United Kingdom	UK	4				
Belgium (Obs.)	BE					1
Bulgaria (Obs.)	BG	1				
Ireland (Obs.)	IE	1				
Total	**99**	**45**	**22**	**5**	**10**	**17**

Annex 2: ELGPN member countries' contribution to ELGPN 2009–10 activities[49]

		WP1 CMS	WP2 Access	WP3 Co-operation and co-ordination	WP 4 Quality	TG1 Policy analysis	TG2 Synergy between projects	ELGPN Steering group meetings	ELGPN Plenary meetings
Austria	AT	x		x ,LC			x		
Cyprus	CY		x	x ,SM					
Czech Republic	CZ	x ,LC, FV	x				x		
Denmark	DK	x			x ,LC		x, TGM		
Estonia	EE				x, SM	x, TGM			
Finland	FI			x	x, FV	x			
France	FR	x	x, LC, FV		x	x		Sgm	
Germany	DE		x	x, LC	x, FV	x		Sgm	
Greece	EL			x	x		x, TGM		
Hungary	HU			x, FV	x	x		Sgm	
Iceland	IS		x, LC, SM						
Italy	IT	x		x					
Latvia	LV			x	x			Sgm	PM
Lithuania	LT	x, FV	x						
Luxembourg	LU	x			x			Sgm	PM
Malta	MT	x							
Norway	NO			x					
Poland	PL		x				x, TGM		
Portugal	PT	x			x			Sgm	PM
Slovakia	SK	x, SM				x, TGM		Sgm	
Slovenia	SI	x		x, FV		x	x, LC		
Spain	ES		x	x				Sgm	PM
Sweden	SE	x							
The Netherlands	NL		x						
Turkey	TR		x	x		x			
United Kingdom	UK	x	x, FV		x				
Belgium (Obs.)	BE								
Bulgaria (Obs.)	BG								
Ireland (Obs.)	IE								
PES network									
ETF				x					
Cedefop					x				
Fedora			x						
IAEVG				x	x				
ICCDPP						x			
Total		**14**	**11**	**14**	**13**	**9**	**6**	**8**	**4**

[49] LC= Lead country, FV= Field visit host, SM= Synthesis meeting host, TGM= Task group meeting host, Sgm= Steering group meeting host, PM= Plenary meeting host, x= Participant

Annex 3: ELGPN meetings 2009–10

ELGPN Plenary Meetings	
19–20 March 2009	Luxembourg
16–18 September 2009	Riga, Latvia
3–4 May 2010	Zaragoza, Spain (in conjunction with Spanish 2010 EU Presidency conference on VET)
22–23 September 2010	Lisbon, Portugal
ELGPN Steering Group meetings	
14 January 2009	Berlin, Germany
18 March 2009	Luxembourg
14 June 2009	Paris, France
7 July 2009	Teleconference
15 September 2009	Riga, Latvia
2 November 2009	Budapest, Hungary
17 February 2010	Bratislava, Slovakia
2 May 2010	Zaragoza, Spain
21 September 2010	Lisbon, Portugal
ELGPN Editorial Board meetings	
29 September 2009	Teleconference
16 April 2010	Teleconference
ELGPN Co-ordination Meetings	
1 September 2009	Brussels
15 January 2010	Brussels
19 April 2010	Brussels
WP1 meetings and field visits	
5–7 May 2009	Vilnius, Latvia
5–7 September 2009	Prague, Czech Republic
15–16 February 2010	Novy Smokovec, Slovakia
WP2 meetings and field visits	
15–17 June 2009	Paris and Orléans, France
1–3 February 2010	Manchester, UK
28–31 March 2010	Reykjavik, Iceland
WP3 meetings and field visits	
15–16 April 2009	Ljubljana, Slovenia
2–4 November 2009	Budapest, Hungary
8–10 March 2010	Limassol, Cyprus
WP4 meetings and field visits	
13–14 May 2009	Berlin, Germany
19–20 October 2009	Helsinki, Finland
25–46 March 2010	Tallinn, Estonia
Task Group 1 meetings	
14–15 December 2009	Bratislava, Slovakia
11–12 August 2010	Tallinn, Estonia
Task Group 2 meetings	
25–26 May 2009	Athens, Greece
7–8 December 2009	Torup, Denmark
17–18 March 2010	Warsaw, Poland

Annex 4:   Current development of national lifelong guidance forums

Country	National forum?	Details
*Austria	Yes	The Austrian National Lifelong Guidance Forum was formally established in 2008. It is facilitated by the Federal Ministry of Education, and involves all other relevant ministries and key stakeholders. It co-operates actively with regional forums. Tasks to date have included the development and implementation of lifelong guidance strategies as part of lifelong learning strategies at national and regional levels, plus linking co-financing of European projects to national strategic priorities. See http://www.lifelongguidance.at
Belgium	In process	Le Conseil de l'Education et de la Formation is an advisory body bringing together 28 member organisations, including the major organisations in education and vocational training, in the French-speaking part of Belgium. It is hoped that the ELGPN will help to stimulate the development of a more fully representative national guidance forum.
Bulgaria	In process	The establishment of a national lifelong guidance forum is planned in the National Lifelong Learning Strategy. The practical implementation is under discussion between representatives of the main stakeholders.
Cyprus	In process	A proposal to establish a National Lifelong Guidance Network has been approved by the Ministerial Council. The Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security are holding detailed discussions; other organisations will be invited. It is hoped to have an agreement for the establishment of the Network by mid-2010.
Czech Republic	Yes	The National Guidance Forum (NGF) established in April 2007 as a consultative forum. In May 2010 it was given a formal mandate and organisational structure as a consultative body on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The secretariat to be provided by the two ministries in rotation.
Denmark	Yes	National Dialogue Forum: main stakeholders (e.g. representatives from relevant ministries, the guidance institutions, guidance counsellor organisation, schools, pupils, employers, trade unions etc.). In addition, a National Council for Adult Guidance operated between 2008 and 2010, though its role was limited to evaluating a temporary scheme for guidance addressed in particular to low-skilled workers in small and medium-sized companies.
Estonia	Yes	National Career Guidance Forum: 18 members cover wide range of stakeholders including institutions from both education and labour sectors, employers, client representatives, practitioners.
Finland	Yes	The Ministry of Education and Culture and Ministry of Employment and the Economy have together established a national lifelong guidance forum, to start its work in autumn 2010. Its first task is the development and implementation of a national strategy for lifelong guidance provision. The forum has an official mandate as a consultative body involving representatives from relevant ministries, the Finnish National Board of Education, regional administration, the council of lifelong learning and the national Euroguidance office.
France	Other mechanism	Inter-ministerial delegation mechanism established, reporting to the Prime Minister's office, with responsibility for developing quality standards and for co-ordinating guidance policies at national, regional and local levels.
*Germany	Yes	A "bottom-up" National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment was established as a legal association in 2006, without direct financial assistance from the government, but with representation from various parts of the federal and Länder governments in a linked Advisory Council (*Kuratorium*), and with financial support for special projects from the Federal Education Ministry through contracts (e.g. for participation in ELGPN and for development of quality standards) and by a higher fee from the Federal Labour Ministry as a supportive member. The Forum has produced a White Paper proposing reforms of the guidance system, and is co-ordinating an "open process of co-ordination" for the development of commonly agreed quality standards (see www.forum-beratung.de and www.beratungsqualitaet.net).

Annexes

Annex 4. (continued)

Annex 4. (continued)

Country	National forum?	Details
Greece	Yes	The organisational framework for the National System for Linking Vocational Education and Training with Employment (ESSEEKA) includes a sub-system on Counselling, Vocational Guidance and Connection with the Labour Market, which is effectively operating as the Greek National Guidance Forum. Its executive authority is the Greek National Centre for Vocational Orientation (EKEP). Tasks have included developing a web-based network of counsellors and counselling structures, developing a quality-assurance system, and developing proposed criteria for qualifications of career guidance practitioners in both education and employment sectors.
*Hungary	Yes	The NPT (*Nemzeti Pályaorientációs Tanács*) (Hungarian LLG Council) was established in January 2008. It has 13 members. Its main role is consultation; it is also responsible for the development of co-operation mechanisms at national and regional levels. Its roles include supervising the national lifelong guidance system development programme (SROP 2.2.2). Its funding is guaranteed by the Hungarian Labour Market Fund on a biannual basis. Its secretariat is provided by the National Employment and Social Office. See: http://www.epalya.hu/NPT
Iceland	Yes	Agreement signed between Ministry of Education and University of Iceland's Centre of Lifelong Guidance Expertise (CLGE), to include the establishment of a national forum of policy-makers, stakeholders and representatives of the guidance community.
Ireland	In process	A National Guidance Forum operated from 2004 to 2006. Its report and recommendations were published (www.nationalguidanceforum.ie). The possibility of establishing a co-ordination mechanism/forum to continue and develop the work of the Forum is currently being considered.
Italy	Yes	A National Lifelong Guidance Forum (*Forum Nazionale per l'Orientamento Lungo Tutto l'Arco della Vita*) was established in October 2009 by the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, regions, social partners and other organisations. Its status is that of an inter-institutional committee.
*Latvia	Yes	A National Guidance Forum *(Sadarbibas Padome)* was mandated in 2007 by the State Education Development Agency..
Lithuania	Yes	National Career Guidance Council: 24 members from the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, association of municipalities, social partners, and other organisations.
Luxembourg	Yes	National Guidance Forum: relevant policy-maker representatives; stakeholders including social partners and guidance practitioners.
Malta	In process	Working group being established in relation to career guidance policy.
Netherlands	In process	Two informal meetings of ministry officials, guidance practitioners, researchers, trainers and others have been held, with guest experts from other EU countries. It is hoped that these may lead to a more formal structure to support a more integrated approach to lifelong guidance policy-making.
Norway	Yes	From January 2011 a National Unit for Co-ordination of Career Guidance Services will be established at Vox, the Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning. Its main aim is to strengthen quality and stimulate development of provision and access to career services for young people and adults in all different phases of life. It will enhance co-operation and co-ordination among key actors, co-ordinate activities across sectors and establish a National Forum with all relevant actors from the different sectors. Participation in the National Forum will reflect representation in the regional partnerships already established to enhance development of lifelong career guidance in the regions.
Poland	Other mechanism	At the invitation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, a Discussion Platform for Lifelong Guidance has been established, with partners including three other ministries and various other bodies. Some regional partnerships have also been set up.
Portugal	In process	Greater co-operation between ministries of education and labour is providing basis for stronger strategic co-ordination.

Annex 4. (continued)

Country	National forum?	Details
Romania	In process	The National Integrated Strategy for Human Resources Development (adopted in May 2009) covers the period 2009-20. It includes the development of a model for information, guidance and orientation, and refers to the creation of an inter-ministerial partnership and an integrated database. See www.anofm.ro and www.cnfpa.ro
Slovakia	Yes	The National Guidance Forum is chaired by the State Secretary of the Ministry of Education, with the State Secretary of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family as vice-chair. The members include representatives of all relevant institutions
*Slovenia	Yes	A Working Group on Lifelong Career Guidance was established in December 2008 for five years. It has had a direct impact on a recent White Paper for Education.
Spain	In process	There have been many preliminary meetings between policy-makers of the two ministries mainly involved: the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Immigration. The main result of these meetings is that the General Council for VET, which advises government at national level, will establish in the near future a Working Group involving the main stakeholders at national level, plus representatives of both sectors from the Autonomous Communities and representatives of the social partners. It will survey the present situation regarding lifelong guidance, and propose steps to be taken, which may include the establishment of a National Forum. Meanwhile, the education sector has established a Technical Committee for Guidance involving only the education administrations (i.e. the Ministry of Education and the Autonomous Communities) with competence in guidance policy, to start discussing the main priorities for lifelong guidance.
Sweden	Other mechanism	Reference group established with stakeholders from a number of national agencies with responsibility for different levels of the education system, and from the Swedish Public Employment Service, to relate to the work of the ELGPN.
Turkey	In process	A Career Information, Guidance and Counselling Services Co-operation Protocol came into force in 2004, with participation of all related stakeholders including public authorities, social partners and NGOs to provide co-ordination and co-operation on career information, guidance and counselling services. Subsequently a Memorandum of Understanding (2009) updated the protocol and defined the responsibilities for a National Career Information System (CIS). Also, various workshops were organised to strengthen inter-agency co-operation on career guidance. Based upon these developments, work has started on the formation of a National Career Guidance Forum.
UK	Yes	UK Government Careers Policy Forum established, with representatives from the four constituent countries of the UK, to share good practice and debate issues. In addition, a UK Careers Sector Strategic Forum is being set up, to being together the key stakeholders and guidance professional associations.

* For detailed case study, see Case Studies 9–13.

Annex 5: Quality assurance matrix and indicators

	Input		Process		Outcome	
	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting
Citizen and user involvement	• Availability of information about rights and services • Resources and tools are easily accessible • Client feedback systems are part of the organisational routines (including customer surveys and efficient customer reaction management systems) • Representatives of users are member of relevant advisory or controlling bodies	*to be added later*	• Organisations responsible for guidance are incorporated into: promotional materials through different media • Organisations responsible for guidance have established customer reaction systems • Organisations responsible for guidance carry out customer satisfaction surveys on a regular basis	*to be added later*	• Citizen/users (users and significant others) are aware about and make use of their rights, resources and tools • The results of user feedback systems are used in improving services	*to be added later*
	• Legal entitlement • Obligation				• % participation rate • Frequency and diversity of activities (Gesprächszahl-faktor) • The outcome could be introduced as certain percentage rates (for discussion in a national context) – next step would be to develop a benchmark	

Annex 5. (continued)

Annex 5. (continued)

	Input		Process		Outcome	
	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting
Practitioner competence	• Professions in the field of guidance are regulated or competences are defined by standards (national, regional or sector-based); (practitioners' competence framework)	*to be added later*	• Different stakeholders are consulted in defining the regulations or standards (national, regional or sector-based)		• A register of qualified, licensed or accredited practitioners is in operation covering both public and private sectors (national, regional or sector-based)	
	• Certification of counsellor				• Professionalisation of practitioners through formal commitments or legal frameworks	
	• Basic training of counsellors, legal requirement for training (standards • Ratio of counsellors at a certain qualification level • Hours/money for further training; offer of continuous training • Compulsory supervision/ intervision		• Establishing/introducing of training programs for guidance practitioners according to agreed standards • (Re-)Shaping of existing curricula according to agreed standards • Funding programs for basic and further training, supervision • Participation in (further) training		• Professional Behaviour, existence of and commitment to a code of ethics • Re-evaluation of practitioners competences on a regular basis	
	• Existence of toolbox for practitioners		• Designing the guidance process in accordance of the state of the art and the need of the client		• Professional use of adequate methods Multi-professional approaches	

Annex 5. (continued)

	Input		Process		Outcome	
	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting
Service provision and im- provement	• Existence of quality management system (including evaluation, monitoring and development/ improvement, certification) • Existence of a quality model based on standards		• Development and evaluation of the quality system (including a system /action plan for continuing improvement of service) • Regular revision of the services preferably involving stakeholders • Research on quality system results is carried out regularly		• Significant improvement in the provision of guidance • Results of monitoring exercises and research are published and introduced to users and stakeholders	
	• Service unit providing guidance in an organisation with multiple tasks is accredited according to agreed guidance service standards (management, administrative procedures)		• Services (organisations/units) are monitored regularly externally (e.g. Matrix) or by self-evaluation and the results are used in improving the services		• Services are accredited on regular basis • Management and administrative procedures are supportive to guidance work	
	• Defined standards for service delivery exist, e.g.: - Codes of ethics - Methodology - Clients-counsellor ratio - Service circumstances (premises, waiting hours etc.) - Financial resources - Administrative processes - Available career information - ICT equipment • Service providers use the latest resources, materials and tools • Service refers sufficiently to the social circumstances (e.g. employment market)		• Service delivery is monitored regularly in relation to achieving defined standards for e.g.: - Level of coverage of service provision - Accessibility to services and information resources - Transparency of service (what clients can expect) - Friendliness of the service - Orientation on the interest of the citizen/client - Amount and comprehensiveness according to need - Duration between the provided service and result (finding a job, returning to school, etc.)		• Delivery in accordance to shared procedures • An action plan is developed • The result of the guidance process is documented (jointly)	
	• Service delivery meets needs of different client groups with differentiated service delivery modes		• Regular client surveys are used (needs, target groups)		• Service delivery for certain client groups has improved	

Annex 5. (continued)

	Input		Process		Outcome	
	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting
Coherence of service and means of co-operation and co-ordination (national, regional and local levels)	• Coherence of guidance provision exists (all-age services) • Coherence of quality systems in different sectors • Guidance is financed on a stable basis					
	• Service providers in an multi-administrative or multi-professional settings have agreed on co-operation and co-ordination about strategies and service delivery • Co-operation/networking among different service providers and related organisations are sufficient and in accordance with the needs of clients				• Co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms are formalised • Transparency of separate guidance services (all ages; all sectors) and modes of co-operation and co-ordination	

Annex 5. (continued)

	Input		Process		Outcome	
	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting	Indicator	Available data and method of collecting

Outcomes	• Learning outcomes/impact
	  o Individual
	  o Economic
	  o Society
	• Labour market/economy outcomes/impact
	  o Individual
	  o Economic
	  o Society
	• Social inclusion outcomes/impact
	  o Individual
	  o Economic
	  o Society
			Outcomes are measured on a regular basis by
			• Surveys
			• Statistical monitoring
			• Case studies
			• Evaluation studies
					Society
					• Transition rate
					• Transition duration
					• Rate of placement
					• Transition from/to unemployment
					Organisation (education, employment)
					• Successful matching (quantitative/qualitative)
					• Retention/drop-out ratio
					Individual
					• Success regarding interest
					• Development of self-competence (e.g. coping, self-esteem, decision-making)
					• Development of competence and employability (e.g. job readiness, knowledge)	

					• Transition rates to the next level of education and to employment	
					• Significant improvement of client's competences and confidence level	
					• Cost effectiveness of the service	

Annex 6: Current development of national quality-assurance systems or feedback mechanisms for lifelong guidance

Country	National quality assurance system?	Details	Implementation
Austria	Yes	The quality-assurance system is organised in parts, not as a general overall system. The key elements are detailed procedures for various areas, e.g. PES, guidance in schools, adult education, etc.	
Belgium	No		
Bulgaria	No		
Cyprus	No		
Czech Republic	No	The list of priorities defined by the NGF act from 17.5.2010 includes analytical surveys and research as one of the main pillars of policy development in guidance. Whilst a comprehensive quality-assurance policy tool remains to be created, there is a consensus among the main policy stakeholders regarding the main targets: • Development of vocational/career counsellors' competences on different levels (PES, school counsellors, others) • System of sustainable supervision for counsellors • Synergies between various components of LLG/vocational/career guidance • Interconnection of databases for searching suitable requalification and further professional education (national qualification system, national vocational system, database of educational opportunities) • Thematic classification of counselling programmes in various parts – modules and the creation of their minimum standards for various groups of clients • Promotion of the counselling services and their importance for employment • Preventive role of LLG in order to avoid drop-outs of learners in upper secondary schools and synergy with incentives to study.	
*Denmark	Yes	Benchmarking of guidance services is conducted in a centrally driven system of mainly numerical outcome indicators linked to educational take-up and retention. This represents a sectoral approach which deals with educational guidance. The Ministry of Education provides guidance centres with a set of quality-assurance tools to support them in reaching their main targets through continuous evaluation of their activities. This includes tools to report quality level, results and effects of the activities. Several indicators are included in the quality-assurance system (see Case Study 14).	Generally, the work related to quality assurance is a task for each of the municipal or regional centres. However, annual reports and developments will be discussed at yearly reviews with the municipal councils and the Ministry respectively. The Ministry of Education has implemented the statistical indicators of the quality-assurance system. It also provided the technical set-up for the surveys in 2009.

Annexes

Annex 6. (continued)

Annex 6. (continued)

Country	National quality assurance system?	Details	Implementation
Estonia	No	Exchange of good practice within the WP4 has supported the development of quality handbooks for regional information and counselling centres (national network of 17 centres).	
Finland	No	National development programmes for basic, second stage, adult and higher education as well as the employment sector to develop information, advice and guidance services in general, including quality assurance and evaluation mechanisms for guidance services.	
France	Yes	In higher education, the evaluation agency for research and higher education (AERES) evaluates every four years (during the negotiation for the new contract with state universities) the training and guidance activities developed by universities.	Creation of a label mechanism for bodies that provide everyone with quality services on the basis of quality standards developed by the delegate for information and guidance. The decree for implementing this label is expected shortly, with an implementation phase over the next two years. The OFPTLV law: preparation of decrees fixing the quality criteria for labelling the structures taking part in the lifelong guidance public service.
*Germany	No	The only nationwide monitoring and feedback system is that operated by the German PES (Bundesagentur für Arbeit), which applies to the overall goals and outcomes of the service. Vocational guidance is seen as one of several interventions which influence the overall outcome of the PES. For the vocational guidance service of the PES (which includes placement in apprenticeship training) the outcome and quality of guidance is measured by an index which is constructed by several indicators including: successful integration into apprenticeship training, successful filling of apprenticeship vacancies, and a customer satisfaction index based on a yearly survey. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research supports and funds the project "Open co-ordination process for the enhancement of the quality and professionalisation of educational and career guidance" conducted by the National Guidance Forum and the Institute for Educational Research of Heidelberg University (see Case Study 15).	As the PES is operating nationwide with local and regional offices, there are yearly data reports and surveys. The results of this reporting (within a more general control mechanism) are the basis for a benchmarking process between the local employment agencies. Within the project "Open co-ordination process for the enhancement of the quality and professionalisation of educational and career guidance", the involvement of all actors and stakeholders in this process and the link to policy-makers in an advisory council is innovative and expected to enhance the acceptance of the outcomes.

Annex 6. (continued)

Annex 6. (continued)

Country	National quality assurance system?	Details	Implementation
*Greece	Yes	The Greek model system for quality assurance of guidance services uses a feedback mechanism for investigating the needs of its target groups in order to ensure that what is on offer is what clients need. In addition, it uses feedback in order to investigate client satisfaction with the services provided and the staff, and makes use of these findings. The key elements of the feedback mechanism are the appropriate quality indicators (e.g. client need surveys), the methodology for conducting the surveys, the necessary evidence (e.g. questionnaires for client need surveys), and the way the service is making use of clients' feedback for improving its services (see Case Study 16).	The data collection can utilise several techniques, e.g. client need surveys with the help of a special questionnaire, communicating with mainstream citizens by mail, e-mail and by word of mouth, collecting information from persons connected to a specific target group (e.g. parents, teachers, members of clubs), investigating the needs at different time periods etc. The client need surveys always take into account the different needs of the two sexes as well as of disadvantaged social groups. Following the statistical processing and analysis of the data collected, the guidance service revises its action plan to make its services more consistent with client needs and client views.
*Hungary	No	A national evaluation of the SROP 2.2.2 career counsellors' work will be launched in 2010. The NPT has ordered some policy researches in this field. A national customer satisfaction survey is under development (see Case Study 17).	
Iceland	No	In the midst of Iceland's severe economic crisis, the Althing (Icelandic parliament) passed a law in March 2009 which stated that only certified guidance counsellors (with an MA in Guidance) can be employed as such, and that all students have a right to guidance from a certified guidance counsellor.	
Ireland	No	The National Guidance Forum quality guidelines provide the following: (a) Framework for developing quality guidance-related activities. (b) Code of principles that should be adhered to in the provision of guidance-related activities. The NGF quality guidelines are designed as a development tool. It is recommended that internal and external assessment are the most appropriate forms of evaluation to be used in organisations.	Work to develop a quality-assurance system for the Adult Educational Guidance Services is ongoing. Also, the Post-Primary Whole School Guidance Planning process ensures quality assurance in the provision of guidance within the secondary-school system.
Italy	No	ISFOL with the support of the Italian Ministry of Labour is promoting a national survey called: "Indagine Naionale sullo stato dell'Orientamento in Italia". In April 2010, a first report of the results on guidance provision at national level was presented. The collection of data and information is still ongoing: the idea is to move from a quantitative to a qualitative analysis of the guidance systems, where quality is the main issue.	

Annexes

Annex 6. (continued)

Country	National quality assurance system?	Details	Implementation
Latvia	No	The assurance of quality guidance in the education sector is not yet operational. However, the national education inspectorate has agreed to develop a separate module and quality indicators on implementation of careers education within the national mechanism for school accreditation.	
Lithuania	No	The elements of the guidance quality-assurance mechanisms have been created; the legal acts regulating the accreditation of the career information points and career guidance centres have been created and are being implemented.	
Luxembourg	No		
Malta	No		
Netherlands	No	Quality assurance is receiving more attention but there are no implementation proposals yet. Evidence-based policy making is being introduced at national level.	
Norway	No	The regional partnerships have worked in networks to promote quality development. Many of the career centres have developed quality-assurance routines in their local practices. Recommendations for formal qualifications for career guidance practitioners in schools have recently been developed by the national education authorities.	
Poland	No	Recently many activities have been undertaken, aiming at improving the quality of career guidance services in public employment services. In 2007 two regulations of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy were prepared: on standards for labour market services; and on the detailed rules for providing labour market services by public employment services. To ensure high quality of vocational counsellors' services, the necessary qualifications of a teacher-vocational counsellor were specified in a regulation of the Minister of National Education on 12 March 2009.	To improve qualifications and provide high-quality services of vocational counsellors in schools and educational institutions, training courses are organised on e.g. the counselling interview, and the rules for working with a disabled client or with a client from a different cultural background. On-line training, using ICT, was introduced in 2009.
*Portugal	Yes	A long-standing mechanism has been based on a set of measures monitoring the typology of users and the interventions developed in the public employment service. At present the system is undergoing a strong change to widen the assessment so to include impact measures (skills, employment) through follow-up activities, monitoring the quality of processes, and assessing the levels of tranparency and of citizen access to services. Also, a joint effort of stakeholders is being undertaken to harmonise quality measures and indicators across sectors (education, labour market, other) (see Case Study 18).	At present the employment services possess a systematic harmonised system that is regularly updated by the guidance personnel and analysed centrally for policy adjustments.
Romania	No		
Slovakia	No		

Annexes

Annex 6. (continued)

Country	National quality assurance system?	Details	Implementation
Slovenia	No	On policy level, foreseen in an existing ESF operational plan as a part of a future project.	
Spain	No	Some materials for guidance practitioners have been produced to improve their daily practice.	
Sweden	Yes	The National Schools Inspectorate is a new separate authority in Sweden. It has the task of examining the quality and equivalence in schools through educational inspection and supervision.	
Turkey	No		
UK	Yes	The Matrix standard provides a quality framework for the effective delivery of information, advice and/or guidance (IAG) on learning and work. It uses an outcome-based approach and is used in any setting where IAG is given to support individuals in their learning and work, regardless of the type, size or sector of the service or organisation. It has eight elements (four focus on delivery and four on management), covering 40 performance measures. The Matrix quality award for advice and guidance providers has been established for several years. It is currently under review to ensure it remains fit for purpose.	Accreditation of the guidance providers is for three years.

* For detailed case study, see Case Studies 14–18.

Annex 7:   Sources of information about guidance projects

Lifelong Learning Programme project databases

Leonardo da Vinci: Compendium & Products
This database (http://leonardo.ec.europa.eu/pdb/index_en.cfm) includes all (not just guidance-related) pilot projects, mobility projects and other measures financed under the Leonardo da Vinci Programme phases I and II (1995–2006). It contains information both about projects (title, year, partners, short project description etc.) and about their products. The database permits the use of the following search criteria: type of measures (including 'pilot projects'), target groups, themes etc. This database has been transferred into the Eve portal (see below), but the advantage of the Compendium & Products database is that guidance is one of the search categories. Using the criteria 'pilot projects' and 'vocational/career guidance' in 2009 resulted in a substantial number of guidance-related projects: 337 in all (255 from phase I; 82 from phase II). However, not all of these projects were guidance projects per se: in some, guidance was just one of several elements in the project.

Adam
Adam (http://www.adam-europe.eu) is an EU portal which offers access to information and products of the Leonardo da Vinci projects. Since 2008, co-ordinators of Leonardo da Vinci projects have been obliged to enter information on their projects into the Adam database, which also includes some but not all previous projects. Entering the search criterion 'guidance' in 2009 resulted in 49 hits; entering search criterion 'career guidance' resulted in 103 hits. But some guidance-related projects appear to be missing, and many of the projects listed are more strongly related to other themes than guidance.

Eve
In 2009 the portal Eve (http://ec.europa.eu/eve), which stands for *'espace virtuel d'échange'*, replaced Adam and previous Compendiums. It is the new e-platform for the dissemination and exploitation of results of all programmes and projects supported by DG EAC (i.e. not just the Leonardo da Vinci Programme). Eve also provides links to project outputs (manuals, publications, questionnaires and other tools) if these have been provided by the project co-ordinator.

Other dedicated databases

ELGPN database
The ELGPN database (http://elgpn.eu/elgpndb) includes policy-related initiatives and practices from ELGPN member countries. The examples are selected and promoted by the national ELGPN representatives. The format used is based on the European Commission's Knowledge System for Lifelong Learning (KSLLL). The examples are categorised in accordance with the priorities of the EU Council 2008 Resolution on lifelong guidance and the OECD/EU 2004 handbook for guidance policy-makers.

Euroguidance – project and practice database
The Euroguidance website (http://www.euroguidance.net/) includes a database of guidance projects. This is a fully searchable database of examples of good practice (not always policy-related) in guidance projects, plus useful tools and resources for guidance. The search criteria are:

- programme;
- type of project;
- title of project;

- topic (for example, guidance policy, quality standards, social inclusion, training of guidance staff, etc.);
- target groups (for example, guidance counsellors, policy-makers, unemployed, etc.);
- country.

The database includes only a limited number of guidance projects, but there could be opportunities for further development and use of this database in the context of the work of the ELGPN.

Guidenet project

Guidenet is a Leonardo da Vinci project which was carried out in the period from 2001 to 2004. The aim of the project was to establish a transnational network of expertise, to gather together guidance initiatives, to evaluate and comment upon them, and to disseminate them as widely as possible within the guidance communities in Europe. The project had two outputs: a virtual forum; and a project database, which is the reason why this project is still relevant to ELGPN. The primary target-groups for Guidenet were guidance counsellors, guidance organisations, policy-makers and other actors in the guidance field at all levels nationally and transnationally. The project database is available on http://www.guidenet.org/. The database includes many guidance projects which finished before 2005. For each project, a short description is available. The project database can be searched by country, programme, target group, theme, title and type. One of the aims of the project was to look for synergies by establishing working groups for key themes: ICT in guidance, social inclusion, networking, and training of guidance counsellors. Reports which aimed at synergy between projects within each of these key themes are still available on the project website. Though Guidenet is a rich database of guidance projects, it does not include projects which were completed after 2005; however, it is still very relevant to the work of ELGPN.

Leonardo da Vinci Programme publications

The European Commission's DG Education and Culture regularly publishes publications which present selected pilot and mobility projects as examples of good practice. These publications can help ELGPN members to focus on projects which have already been identified as representing good practice.

Success Stories: Europe Creates Opportunities (printed in 2007). This brochure presents a selection of twenty LDV projects carried out in the period 2001-07 that have been singled out for the transferability of their products and results, and their potential interest and usefulness to other new users. Only two of these projects are guidance-related projects.

50 Success Stories: Leonardo da Vinci Community Programme (printed in 2006). This brochure presents a selection of 50 Leonardo da Vinci projects from the period 2001–06, including 12 guidance innovation projects. Guidance projects (see 'Category 2: Guidance and counselling) have been selected as examples of best practice which have contributed to the Copenhagen process and the Lisbon strategy.

Women and Technical Professions (brochure in Good Practices series, 2002). The European Commission has prepared a series of brochures entitled "Leonardo da Vinci — Good Practices" to inform people about the results of the Programme. These brochures are designed to familiarise as many people as possible with examples of good practice under the programme. The projects presented in this brochure, carried out in the period from 1995 to 1999, focus on women and technical professions, and have been selected for their impact and their originality.

Social and Occupational Integration of Disadvantaged People (brochure in Good Practices series, 2003). Innovative projects from the period 1995–97, aimed at social and occupational integration of disadvantaged people, are presented. A few of these projects have strong guidance elements.

National agencies also publish brochures which present examples of good practice from each member-state. These brochures can be a rich source of information about relevant guidance projects.

Annex 8: Examples of guidance-related projects in the Progress Programme (DG Employment)

- Benchmarking (PES Austria)
  http://www.ams.or.at/_docs/proposal_0507.pdf

- PES support for better work & life reconciliation (PES Malta)
  http://www.etc.gov.mt/site/page.aspx?pageid=2149

- Lifelong guidance for jobseekers (VDAB - PES Belgium)
  http://www.afsz.hu/resource.aspx?resourceID=full_kulfoldo_palyaor_llg_job_forjobseekers

- Open access (PES Ireland)
  http://www.openaccessproject.ie/index.asp

- E-counselling (PES Slovenia)
  http://www.ess.gov.si/eng/InternationalProjects/ESvetovanje/ESvetovanje.htm

For further information about these projects, the public employment services in the relevant countries should be contacted.

Annex 9:   Perceived added value of the ELGPN to member countries

Country	Responses related to the added value of participation in the ELGPN
Austria	Raising awareness; concrete policy developments, based on inputs from transnational co-operation; opening minds and developing common understanding. The National Forum would not exist without the long history of transnational co-operation – OECD, Joint Actions, Expert Group, ELGPN and the active contribution of Austria in them.
Cyprus	ELGPN acted as a catalyst for the beginning of bi-ministerial discussions for the creation of a National Forum for Guidance.
Czech Republic	ELGPN has been having a very strong impact on the guidance policy developments in the Czech Republic. With the National Guidance Forum, established in 2007 under the influence of the ELGPN processes and fully formalised in May 2010, the guidance sector has obtained a co-ordination mechanism at the national level for the first time in the Republic's history. The further development of guidance policy in the country has been outlined through the policy act adopted by the National Guidance Forum at its first formal session which took place on 17 May 2010. The main value of the PLAs and the field visits had been in sharing of an immense quantity of relevant knowledge and expertise followed with a focused discussion and reflections which have helped in gaining insights in the contemporary practices and underlying principles. It was very important to identify levels of convergence hidden behind the diversity of the practices and traditions in the member states. The outcomes created throughout this first phase are a very good starting point for future work, which should be more target-focused and specific.
Denmark	ELGPN has facilitated a process of mutual learning among European countries and the sharing of good ideas and good practice. In particular in the work packages, the peer learning events and the field visits have contributed to mutual inspiration among the member states. This has lead to increased networking between Denmark and the other member states. ELGPN has an impact as a knowledge base on European policy development, where sharing of similar challenges can be applied to a national context.
Estonia	As the period is continuing it is too early to make any comments. At national level discussions on the issues at EU level have been introduced at the national career guidance forum – an opportunity for stakeholders to create a link between EU framework and national focus.
Finland	National development programmes for basic, second-stage, adult and higher education as well as the employment sector to develop information, advice and guidance services in general including quality assurance and evaluation mechanisms for guidance services would have started with or without ELGPN.
France	Support to the development of policies. This work was helpful during the preparation of the 24 November 2009 law about lifelong guidance and vocational training. It will also be helpful during the implementation phase. In terms of "political" impact in France, it is difficult to isolate the impact of ELGPN from the impact of the 2008 resolution which occurred during the EU French presidency.
Germany	In general, the existence of ELGPN and the preceding guidance activities of the EU fostered the awareness of policy-makers for the importance of guidance for lifelong learning and employment strategies at national level. Guidance became a strong priority of the Ministry of Education and Research and of the political agenda in general. Thus the 2008 strategic "Conception of the Federal Government on Lifelong Learning" included a chapter on "The improvement of educational guidance" which emphasised the necessity of the further development of guidance, improved transparency of services and regular further training of practitioners. In addition, the exchange of ideas and the experiences of other ELGPN members on the four priority themes stimulated similar or parallel developments in Germany (information portal and telephone hotline, local learning and guidance initiatives and quality development).
Greece	The experience gained from the progress of other countries, the co-operation developed on guidance policies and practices (policy sharing) and the support for the identification of lifelong guidance policy issues for which there are gaps in policy development and implementation at national level.
Hungary	Cross-sectoral co-operation and a strong push for the national developments from EU level. The Hungarian lifelong guidance council (NPT) as well as the national LLG system development programme are strongly linked with the work of the ELGPN. There is immediate impact from one to the other. It is also very important that the same staff are responsible for the ELGPN, the NPT and the national development work. A further synergy is that currently Hungary together with Austria and Slovakia is developing an implementation plan for lifelong guidance within a lifelong learning framework.

Annex 9. (continued)

Country	Responses related to the added value of participation in the ELGPN
Iceland	The work in the ELGPN has helped raise awareness of access and especially of the use of ICT in guidance. Our participation in WP2 has given us a valuable opportunity both to learn from other countries about development of ICT systems in guidance and to share the knowledge with the policy makers.
Italy	A better understanding about what is going on at EU level in terms of policies and strategies related to lifelong guidance and an active role in the promotion of national initiatives, with synergies between education, VET, labour market and guidance guidelines and policies.
Latvia	Input from the ELGPN project has helped to convince national policy makers that "European guidance policy" is not some abstract metaphorical construct by showing concrete examples of policy and practice from other member countries. Career guidance systems in the Member States are as different as the education and labour systems which they serve. The project is helpful in building a common platform for discussion and increasing understanding of guidance in Europe.
Lithuania	The participation in ELGPN activities provokes better understanding of the national guidance system and guidance practices and systems in other European countries. This process also inspires and gives valuable ideas for further development of the national lifelong guidance system (now it will be much easier to make proposals for the amendments to the National Career Guidance System which are planned).
Luxembourg	As the national forum discussed more or less the main subjects, the feedback from the ongoing work in ELGPN was useful to our discussions.
Malta	Good practices in colleges and co-ordination of work with entities and organisations.
Netherlands	Inspiration by the speed of change in some countries, looking for buddy countries, analysing good methods and tools.
Norway	Participation in ELGPN has widened the perspectives and increased awareness of potential related to national challenges in Norway. Discussions and examples from other countries have been useful as a basis for further progress nationally. Establishing international contacts has been an added value as well.
Poland	Measures taken by our state were inspired or even "enforced" by the fact of participation in the ELGPN activities. Opportunity of better co-operation for career guidance activities at the national level through involvement of the most important government institutions, responsible for strategic solutions and legal provisions, in ELGPN work programme implementation, constitutes the added value. Another important asset is synergy between the Euroguidance and ELGPN activities. More and more recipients are getting access to documents, reports and other analyses of ELGPN.
Portugal	The participation of Portugal in the ELGPN coincided with the setting up of an integrated lifelong guidance system. The discussion about quality assessment tools and the establishment of national forums has been directly useful to develop and pilot the structures that now begin to support this system.
Slovakia	The main added value is that the lifelong guidance has become one of the main issues in the government programme because of the importance of lifelong guidance in the whole of the EU.
Slovenia	National conference on CMS in September 2010 for people from practice.
Spain	ELGPN theoretical and practical findings and outcomes, as well as many of the ELGPN proposals, have contributed to national policy development, since the Spanish Ministry of Education has been able to include them in its general working guidelines on lifelong guidance. More specifically when referring to VET, ELGPN findings and outcomes have provided the Ministry of Education (Directorate General for VET) with a strong and solid foundation to work out a framework connecting VET, lifelong learning (LLL) and lifelong guidance (LLG) in such a way that they can no longer be separated.
Sweden	For the Swedish National Agency the added value has been the good quality in all meetings with inputs and experiences from the moderator, experts and all members.
Turkey	In Turkey a web-based career information system is being developed. Since the development of ICT tools is important for the package of access, this motivated the Ministry of Education and stakeholders to contribute to the development of the system. Moreover, in the WP3 we have realised that our Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is a significant development for us.
United Kingdom	Responsibility for careers advice and guidance policy is devolved to the four countries of the UK. The members of the UK's ELGPN team have provided the foundation for a UK Governments Careers Policy Forum, consisting of representatives from all four policy teams, to share good practice and debate issues.

Annexes

Case studies

Case Study 1: France (WP1)

Extending the 'Pathway for the Discovery of Jobs and Training' to all pupils from 12 years (Year 8) to the end of secondary education

Background

The initiative involves the implementation of Section 1 of the Resolution on Guidance (2008), which refers to the encouragement of the lifelong acquisition of career management skills. It addresses measures aimed at incorporating career education as a competence to be acquired by students through their school activities and their syllabus. Three domains of competence (knowledge of professions, knowledge of training courses, and self-assessment and self-knowledge) are identified in this initiative, which is implemented together with three other measures:

- The assessment of the common "base" of knowledge and skills (the 7th competence clearly identifies career learning) is to become widely applicable and compulsory in June 2010. By 2011, students will need to fulfil this requirement in order to obtain the *Diplôme National du Brevet*;
- The implementation of the reform of the *Lycée* at the start of the 2010 school year, which offers a new framework for the establishment of a career education and training programme. This will see the introduction of 2 hours per week dedicated to three customised activities – support, further study, and career guidance – totalling 72 timetabled hours annually for every student. It also offers two exploration subjects for 15-year-olds (i.e. Year 11, the first year at the *Lycée*), involving 3 hours per week dedicated to the exploration of two subject domains, together with the education, training and professional pathways and activities associated with them. In addition, students are offered tutorials by volunteer teachers, in order to advise and guide them in their training and career choices throughout the three years they spend at the *Lycée*. A series of courses are furthermore offered during school holidays in order to provide the support that students need if they wish to make changes in the choice of their vocation.
- The testing of a competences booklet as provided for by the 2009 Act on Lifelong Guidance and Vocational Training.

Participants

Teachers, with the assistance of careers advisors, counsellors and specialists from the professional or educational field, in a syllabus placed under the responsibility of head teachers.

Aims

The initiative is first and foremost pedagogical in nature, involving as it does suggestions for activities to be organised within each of the three dimensions of the capacity to discover one's career directions in a lifelong perspective. Pedagogical activities are suggested for each school year. An online *Webclasseur* – developed by Onisep and used by the Ministry of National Education as a base for future developments – is used to help students develop their "Guidance training passport".

The key aim is greater autonomy on the part of the pupils in order to better plan their career choices in periods of transition. Additional aims include:

- Making training systems more transparent, thus ensuring improved access to, and use of, opportunities.
- Supporting educational aspirations in order to boost social mobility and raise levels of education and training as established by the 2005 Act (i.e. 50% of an age group with higher education qualifications, 80% with the baccalaureate, all with at least a first vocational qualification).

All schoolchildren from 12 years old (Year 8) onwards are concerned.

Implementation

- The impetus is nationwide, and linked to the establishment and determination of school standards. With the help of regional terms of reference, it is also applied regionally by the chief education officers of the academy, and linked to the regional councils on whom it depends for financial support.
- A national circular was issued on 11 July 2008 describing the measure and announcing its wholesale introduction at the start of the new school year in September 2009. Some schools had introduced the initiative on a voluntary and trial basis in the previous year, i.e. from September 2008.
- A national seminar detailing the initiative was held on 15–16 October 2009, bringing together 300 executives, regional counsellors, chief education officers and school inspectors.
- An on-line publication concerning the initiative was placed on the French Schools Directorate website, Éduscol. This is an information reference website for educators and education managers.
- Resource support services were supplied by Onisep.

Outcomes

- It is too early to have any performance indicators and no formal evaluative survey has been planned thus far. However, the progress of the implementation of the initiative is being monitored by local education information and career guidance technical advisors (at the level of local education authorities), and by information and career guidance inspectors (at the level of the *Departements*).
- The Act on Lifelong Guidance and Vocational Training, dated 24 November 2009, requires the trialling of a student's "competence booklet" which, in their training and career education programme, will emphasize, the competences that they will have acquired in a non-academic teaching context. This trial use strengthens the setting up of the portfolio (which is very similar to the "Guidance Training Passport") for schoolchildren by supporting the technical developments that are essential to an on-line application.
- A key challenge is the extent to which teachers will adopt the initiative, given that the new activities will appear to many of them quite distant from the subject for which they have been trained to teach.

Case Study 2: Lithuania (WP1)

Development of a National Framework of Career Management Competences

Background

- The need to develop a National Framework of Career Management Competences was articulated in the National Career Guidance Strategy (2004) adopted by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. A working group of experts was set up in 2007 with the aim of developing a National Framework which would describe the competences that should be acquired in the educational system.
- As a first step, an examination of the career development frameworks that had been designed and successfully implemented in other countries (e.g. Blueprint for Work/Life design in Canada, the National Career Development Guidelines in USA) was carried out.
- The need for the development of the Framework was initially only associated with the students at the level of general education. The examination of examples of career development frameworks in other countries helped to broaden the understanding of career management and career education, and the need for a consistent and continuing process of development of career management competences at different levels. International comparisons also highlighted the need to define the outcomes of the developmental process in terms of competences, which could be measured by a set of indicators.

Participants

Ministry of Education and Science; experts and practitioners from Lithuanian Youth Technical Creativity Palace (Career Planning Centre), University Career Centre, general education school career unit, vocational school.

Aims

The main aim was the development of a National Framework of Career Management Competences, a task that targeted students and school personnel (teachers, trainers, social pedagogues, psychologists, counsellors, career advisors, other) in general education, vocational and higher schools. The key tasks included:

- Description of the student's career management competences – in terms of both criteria and performance indicators – and which should be developed in general, vocational and higher education settings.
- Description of the basic principles and organisation of career education.
- Description of the main activities which should be organised and the main services that should be provided in order to develop career management competences – including career education programmes, information, counselling, work shadowing, etc.
- Description of the methods and tools to be used in career education.
- Description of the core principles of the training to be offered to school personnel who would be involved in the implementation of the career education programme aiming at the development of student's career management competences.

Implementation

The National Framework of Career Management Competences was planned to be implemented at a national level in all the sectors of the education system. The draft Framework emphasised the following areas of competence: self exploration; learning and work exploration; and career planning. The final version of the Framework, however, was not approved due to a disagreement on the content of the document. The working group reached agreement on the main areas for development of career management competences as well as on the list of 11

competences, but failed to agree on the final description of the content of the competences, on the indicators, as well as on the methods of career education service delivery at the different educational levels.

The main debates focused on the core differences between the competences which should be acquired at general, vocational and higher schools. Such competences had to take into account the specific features of each educational level, as well as the different curricula. Furthermore, the already-existing frameworks for career development – such as the Canadian Blueprint – were considered by the working group to reflect different curricular traditions, and thus failing to directly correspond to the principles underpinning the national education system. It was felt that the curricular frameworks developed in other countries reflected linguistic and cultural nuances that needed to be carefully considered, and that the adoption of an already-existing framework, however successful it had proved to be in the context in which it was developed, demanded much more than a mere translation and cultural adaptation of the text.

Higher education institutions appear to be more flexible, and more willing to implement already-existing frameworks. On the other hand, when it came to applying the formal framework that organises the structured learning of career management competences in the VET sector, and especially at the secondary education level, it was felt that there had to be closer attention given to the evaluation of the prevailing curricular traditions and practices.

This experience revealed some important requirements:

- The need for a common conceptual understanding of, and agreement on, the philosophy underpinning career education and career management competences.

- The need to ground the development of the National Framework of Career Management Competences in comprehensive research reflecting: the specificities of the Lithuanian educational tradition; the national context; curriculum development traditions; the administration of services; links between each component of the educational system (general, vocational and higher); and results of the comparative analysis of the frameworks which had been successfully implemented in other countries, as well as deeper understanding of the context in which they had been developed.

Outcomes

- Career education (and its lifelong dimension) was recognised as an important issue at the level of the Ministry of Education and Science. The Ministry approved the National programme for career guidance in the educational system. The programme will be implemented in 2010–13 using ESF support. One of the priorities and objectives foreseen in the programme is development of coherent national models of career education at the general, vocational and higher education sectors.

- The model for general and vocational schools will be developed separately from the model for higher schools, a factor that might cause a degree of incongruence.

- Preparing the amendments to the National Career Guidance Strategy and developing new plan for the implementation of the Strategy, thus highlighting the role of career education, has become a part of the Government programme for 2010.

Case Study 3: Austria (WP1)

Supporting career management skills by accompanying decision-making processes through a multi-dimensional approach

Background

For many years, career guidance in the Austrian educational system has been based on a 3-layer model which focuses mainly on a combined delivery of educational and psychological assistance: [a] The preparation for an occupation or a profession is a basic educational concern and as such is to be found in different forms in school curricula. In addition to that, Grades 7 and 8 in all types of school feature the mandatory subject "careers guidance", which can be taught as a separate subject (one hour per week), can be integrated into several subjects, or can be offered *en bloc* in form of projects days dedicated to the area. [b] Student counsellors – specially trained staff who also have teaching obligations – can be found in all schools. [c] The school psychology services offer professional individual careers counselling within or outside the school. This support is complemented by other services provided outside schools by the PES and the social partners. The 2003 OECD country report noted that the quality of the integration of different inputs in the careers guidance lessons is sometimes poor. The aim of the initiative described in this case study was strengthen the role of school as an educational institution in the field of career guidance. A special focus is set on the acquisition of CMS by the pupils.

Participants

Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture; Federal Ministry of Science and Research; Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection; Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth; Public Employment Service; social partners (Chamber of Labour, Economic Chamber, Federation of Austrian Industry); and practitioners (career guidance teachers, school psychologists, psychological student counsellors)

Aims

- Sensitise schools: supporting the decision-making processes of graduates as regards their educational and professional careers is an essential part of school quality.
- Quality assurance of the obligatory career guidance lessons.
- Improvement of co-ordination inside schools and of co-operation with external services.
- Support of the development of pupils' career management skills.
- Key target group: all teachers in secondary schools, especially head teachers.

Implementation

- The key strategies adopted to implement the initiative included: [a] the development of a concept by a task force; [b] a Ministerial letter to all headmasters, followed by a Ministerial decree; [c] launching a specific website with information and materials to support schools; and [d] the improvement of teacher training in the field of career guidance.
- In the Austrian LLG strategy, the implementation of basic competences for educational career and life planning across all curricula is the first of five priorities. The following competences are particularly emphasised: self-reflection; decision-making; the ability to search for and evaluate information; and the ability to define and pursue one's own targets. The acquisition of these competences should occur through one's own learning experiences in the real situation of the decision-making process.
- Schools should support such learning in various ways, especially in the last two years of the compulsory educational cycle. This support is the responsibility of the entire school staff, and not only of specialists such as student counsellors. Issues related to CMS can be taken up in

Case studies

each and every subject. The focus of the support given by school shifts from a generic to an increasingly individualised and targeted one. The philosophy changes from the "obligation (of school) to deliver" to the "obligation (of student) to gain and collect".

- A catalogue of obligatory measures was defined and proclaimed by decree (see http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/18542/2009_17.pdf). The roles within the school which are linked with the decree were explained. The range of support that is to be offered by schools includes the following: [a] Contribution of all subjects to the development of CMS; [b] The delivery of the obligatory curricular area 'careers guidance', whether this is taught as a separate subject, is integrated in other subjects, or through projects; [c] Projects and organised work experiences to provide practical experiences, which entail a mandatory co-operation with organisations outside school, including the PES; [d] Information and counselling by student counsellors. In all this, the head of school has the overall responsibility for the articulation and implementation of the strategy by means of which the school delivers the CMS-related curriculum.

- Project '*Studienchecker*' for students in higher education. In the field of higher education the basic concept related to career management skills was adapted and is now being tested in form of a project called '*Studienchecker*'. One of the project's specific targets is the strengthening of co-operation between guidance services in schools and universities (see www.studienchecker.at).

- Production of accompanying materials for schools, including [a] Website with relevant information (including legal basis, materials and tools for training and counselling, contact addresses, and so on (see www.bmukk.

gv.at/bo); [b] and Visualisation of references for developing CMS in all curricula.[50]

- Definition of new standards for the training of student counsellors.[51]

- Development and testing of a new training curriculum for co-ordinators of career guidance lessons.[52]

- Order to the teacher training colleges to prioritise training in career guidance, particularly throughout 2010–13 (see http://www.schulpsychologie.at/download/2009-22.pdf).

Outcomes

- LLG is high on the country's political agenda. This is reflected in a common decision by the whole Federal Government confirming the initiative.

- An extensive agreement regarding the objectives of the initiative was reached by policymakers and the social partners.

- The initiative has generated a lot of feedback from schools, most of which is positive.

- The information accompanying the initiative has been much sought after, and well used.

- A systematic evaluation of the measures implemented has not yet been carried out.

- The measures taken in connection with the initiative are multi-layered and need time to become effective. The goal is that every single school assumes its responsibility in this area, and develops its own implementation strategies.

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[50] See http://www.schulpsychologie.at/bildungsinformation/nach-der-matura/lehrerinnen/unterrichtsmaterialien/

[51] See http://www.schulpsychologie.at/schuelerberatung/sbb_lehrgang pdf

[52] See http://www.ph-kaernten.ac.at/fileadmin/_institute/primarstufe/BO_KO_Lehrgang_Curriculum.pdf

Case Study 4: UK (WP2)

The adult advancement and careers service in England

Background

The adult advancement and careers service will be a next-generation service providing expert and impartial careers and skills advice to adults in England. From August 2010, it will supersede the current Careers Advice Service telephone service (formerly *learndirect* advice) and local *nextstep* face-to-face services, by creating a single, national service available online, by telephone, or face-to-face. It will provide access to better information about the labour market and new tools to help adults plan their career development; a new professional development framework for careers advisers; and a new brand to raise the service's appeal to the public.

Participants – Aims and targets

The adult advancement and careers service will be available to all adults in England, whether they are in work, unemployed or looking to return to the labour market. Any adult aged 19 or over (or 18 or over for Jobcentre Plus customers) will be able to access the service, and will receive personalised help and support. People who require more intensive, ongoing support will get that support on the basis of their need. The service will work in close partnership with Jobcentre Plus in order to provide intensive support for Jobcentre Plus customers and with the Connexions service to provide effective transitions for young people.

The current *nextstep* and Careers Advice Service capacity to handle requests for information and advice has been increased in 2009–10 in response to the economic downturn, and increased demand for careers advice from adults at risk of redundancy or recently unemployed. In the current economic circumstances, capacity in the face-to-face channel in 2010-11 will be maintained at broadly its current target level. However, capacity to handle telephone calls, e-mails and online sessions will be increased substantially.

The benchmark for the adult advancement and careers service that 50% of all customers who create an action plan with an adviser or through the on-line channel should enter training, get sustainable employment or progress in work. The face-to-face channel of the service will operate to a set of national outcome targets – for users to enter or progress in learning, training or work. These will encourage the effective targeting of this constrained resource where it is most required and a focus on good outcomes for individual customers.

Implementation

The adult advancement and careers service will provide a core offer of labour-market-focused careers and skills information and advice accessed face-to-face, by telephone, or online (with access to information and advice through email, web forums and text messaging). It will offer all adults, through the channel that they choose, professional information and advice; access to up to date labour market information; a personal skills assessment, with the aid of online tools as necessary, to diagnose individual need; information on individual potential entitlements to public funding to support learning; support to open a skills account; up-to-date information on learning and training courses; information about the qualifications and skills required for roles, advice on funding options, advice on returning to work, and advice on childcare; the ability to book telephone or face-to-face careers and skills advice sessions; and referral to and from a wide range of relevant and specialist services and agencies (including appropriate websites) such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, housing associations, debt advice agencies, and community legal advice.

In addition, individuals in specified national priority groups will also be able to access an intensive, ongoing offer comprising additional sessions with face-to-face advisers, free of charge. These could

include identification of personal goals and targets; a skills and career action plan; and interventions, referrals and support to help people to overcome wider barriers to progression.

The telephone service will also offer comprehensive information and advice and ongoing and in depth support from suitably qualified careers advisers. Core services will be available in 8 minority languages in addition to English; services to support the hard of hearing and those with visual impairments will also be available. On-line careers forums will be actively monitored and regularly updated by careers advisers.

For most customers, the online channel will be the first point of contact with the adult advancement and careers service and skills accounts. It will operate as a virtual careers adviser, so that the individual customer journey will aim to replicate the offer available through the telephone and face-to-face channels. The system will respond to the information individuals provide, by tailoring the information and resources offered to them. It will meet industry standards for data protection and identity assurance; and it will meet the needs of adults with learning difficulties or disabilities. There will be a secure intranet for advisers in the face-to-face and telephone channels, drawing together all the information and resources and tools they need. This intranet system will also allow the collection and sharing of customer information, using a new customer relationship management system

The website will provide open access to many tools and services such as a skills diagnostic tool, using psychometric techniques to enable individuals to assess their skills, abilities, personal attributes and preferences, and career and work objectives; a CV builder, providing a template for effective CV structure and headings, with guidance in completing a CV; regularly updated labour market information; local job vacancies from Jobcentre Plus systems; and comprehensive information on career paths, setting out the qualifications, skills and experience required for specific careers and jobs. It will provide a course directory, enabling individuals to access course information for all accredited colleges, private- and third-sector training providers; information about the quality of learning providers; a checker enabling individuals to get information on their potential entitlement to public funding for training, covering support with tuition fees, and learner support funds to help with other costs (transport, childcare, books and equipment); a wide range of online information and advice including access to advisers via email, web chat and forum facilities; text, video and audio information on careers and jobs; and the latest news and articles on relevant work and skills issues.

For full information about plans for the adult advancement and careers service go to www.bis.gov.uk/fuelling-potential

Case Study 5: Germany (WP2)

Career choice portal (planet-beruf.de)

Background

This information portal "planet-beruf.de" is a combination of different online media supporting young people, teachers and parents in all issues of career choice and also to find the regional service for career guidance and placement into apprenticeships. This combination of online media is accompanied by the print and CD media distributed in more than 11,000 schools to students, teachers and parents – all regularly updated in relation to changes in schools, training and the labour market. The internet portal is provided by the Federal Employment Agency (BA), which has the legal task to provide career guidance for young people and adults. According to §33 of Social Code III, this includes the provision of career information and orientation as part of the service. The portal and the assisting print and other media are part of the realisation of the legal task for the target groups. They are also used within the career education classes which are provided co-operatively within schools by teachers and career counsellors according to the Agreement between the BA and the Standing Conference of the Education Ministers of the Laender (KMK) on the Framework of Co-operation between Career Service and Schools (2004). Planet-beruf aims at widening access to guidance. It assists young people to prepare their choice of career and training in a well-informed and systematic way and also helps users to make an appointment for a face-to-face guidance session if necessary. In addition, it is an outstanding example of concrete co-operation across the two sectors of education and employment.

Participants – aims and targets

The media combination consists of the online portal "planet-beruf.de" (planet profession), a self-exploration programme "Berufe-Universum" (Universe of Professions), a training programme "How

to apply for a training or job" and supporting print and CD media. The self-exploration programme assesses interests, strengths, occupational behaviour and school marks and compares this information with the job requirements of professions that fit the user´s profile. The universe of professions shows the professional profiles and gives further detailed information including videos and films about the related profession or training. It also informs the user whether training opportunities/apprenticeships are available in the region. The online portal is linked to the nationwide database of all professions (BERUFENET) and the database for all further training facilities including HE (KURSNET), as well as to the Online Job Market (JOBBOERSE). Besides this online approach, comprehensive information and exploration facilities are provided in the local Career Information Centres. Students in lower secondary schools are the main target group. Teachers receive stimulations and suggestions for the career education classes, and parents receive advice on how to support the career choice of their children. In addition, guidance practitioners, social workers and other partners make use of this offer.

Implementation

Following a comprehensive approach, the detailed media combination covers all relevant aspects of the career choice process. Therefore, all media are structured along the process "informing – deciding – applying" and can be used in a flexible way in the classroom, at home or during a counselling session. Teaching in career education becomes more vivid and activity-oriented. Students are activated through discovering learning and interactive elements. The concept, update and elaboration of the media are accompanied and monitored by an editorial board of teachers representatives, social partners and of teacher training institutions.

The portal is located within the overall webpage of the Federal Employment Agency (www.arbeitsagentur.de) but can also be accessed separately (www.planet-beruf.de). It is linked to other career ini-

tiatives like the "Girls' Day" or the "Career Choice Passport". All initiatives are implemented nationwide regardless of the different school systems of the Laender. Regional agreements on the co-operation of schools with the career service recommend the use of the BA media. Monthly statistics count the number of users and the calls of pages. Proposals of the customer's reaction management are considered for further development. An online user satisfaction survey is planned.

Outcomes

Since the launch of the portal in autumn 2008, nearly 6 million visitors have been counted, with 60 million calls/clicks of pages (June 2010). Economic benefits are derived through the comprehensive use of the portal by students, teachers, counsellors and parents in increasing the level of information, self and career awareness. Other career information media, classroom teaching and face-to-face counselling become more effective. Integrating all related aspects of information in a comprehensive way by ICT reinforces the career activities of students, teachers and parents. It allows students to "play" and navigate around the issues of career in familiar ways. Those with poor ICT skills can acquire more competences through using them and become more self-aware. For teachers, the portal makes their teaching more attractive and authentic in activating students. There are also chatroom meetings where special issues can be discussed or relevant actual information is given by experts. The online portal and related print media are linked to each other. Both deepen the career reflections of all involved. Therefore, all future print media will be linked to the contents of the portal. For the proposed professions according to the user's profile more detailed information like daily schedules of job

holders, authentic reports on the reality of the professions, videos and films are offered. Public stars (like famous soccer players, actors, musicians or others) appear as door openers for questions of career choice by telling their personal (success) stories. Other persons or institutions working in the field of career orientation co-operate with planet-beruf or use elements of the portal for their work, thus stimulating co-operation in the field.

The strength of this example is the modern structure and design of its ICT approach which makes it attractive for young users. The combination of different tools with related databases makes it a flexible support for career guidance in general and widens access to the services.

In June 2010 the Federal Employment Agency was awarded the annual Comenius multimedia award for the internet portal (www.planet-beruf.de) by the Society for Pedagogy and Information (Gesellschaft für Paedagogik und Information: GPI). It received the Comenius-EduMedia medal for outstanding examples of multimedia products. The award acknowledged the portal's pedagogical concept, its content and its design, and underlined that it is particularly suitable for young people.

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Case Study 6: Turkey (WP2)

Background

The "Career Information, Guidance and Counselling Services Cooperation Protocol" was signed and came into force on 26 October 2004, with the participation of all relevant stakeholders including public authorities, social partners, and NGOs to provide co-ordination and co-operation on career information, guidance and counselling services. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in 2009 with the participation of the organisations in the protocol in order to update the tasks and roles defined in the protocol and define the responsibilities for the National Career Information System (CIS). The MOU has been a significant effort and outcome to enhance communication, co-ordination and collaboration between all the stakeholders.

Participants

Participants include the Ministry of National Education, the PES in the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the social partners, the employment organisations and the National Qualifications Authority. The target groups include individuals from every age and a wide range of specific groups such as students, youth adults, unemployed, employment seekers, people want to change career, retired, disabled, women and dropouts.

Aims

The main aim of the MOU is to define and contribute to the development of the roles and responsibilities of all the related stakeholders, government, social partners, universities and non-governmental organisations in the national web-based career information system and to also support an integrated approach to all the lifelong guidance services in Turkey.

Implementation

All the stakeholders will provide updated data periodically to the national web-based system. Career guidance services will be carried out in a co-ordinated way, and the stakeholders will share the materials and documents they develop.

The MOU covers the guidelines for the actions to be carried out by the stakeholders on lifelong career information, guidance and counselling services at national, local and international levels (Euroguidance, PLOTEUS etc.) and on the national web-based system to be co-ordinated by the Ministry of National Education.

Monitoring and evaluation will be carried out by the Career Guidance Services Development Unit established under the General Directorate for Special Education Guidance and Counselling Services of the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MONE) and by the Occupation Information Commission (MEDAK) under the Turkey Employment Agency. The strategic plan is in the process of being developed by all the stakeholders. It includes outcome indicators, such as the number of personnel trained in ICT skills, the number of students who use web-based self-assessment tools, etc.

Outcomes

- Inter-agency co-operation in the development of the career information system.
- Co-operation, co-ordination and collaboration at national level.
- Effective use of human resources and finances.
- Sustainability of the national web-based information system.
- Increased awareness of guidance services.
- Increased quality of services.
- Right to use career guidance services.

Although career guidance services have previously been provided mostly in educational institutions, hereafter individuals from every part of the society will have the opportunity to benefit from them. There are organisations providing career guidance services at local level. Also, structured and institutionalised career guidance providers are available. The MOU is an opportunity to extend co-operation,

co-ordination and collaboration between all the relevant stakeholders. A web-based career information system has been established.

Lessons learned

- Team work.
- Importance of co-operation.
- Effective use of the resources.
- Use of stocked information.

Case Study 7: France (WP2)

Background

Guidance services in France are specialised on needs of different publics, and depend on different institutions. Therefore, they are usually considered as too partitioned. That is the reason why political initiatives give incentive to pool services. The Law about lifelong guidance and vocational training (November 2009) plans to recognise as a participant to guidance public service "bodies delivering to every person in one single place a group of services permitting to get complete and objective information about jobs careers and training courses and advice in regard to be able to choose in full knowledge a job or a training course …or to be orientated towards a specific counselling service…".

The "Cité des Métiers" is an example of pooling services.

Participants

While they group several services dedicated to young and adults people, the "Cités des Metiers" try to widen access to services for everybody, with quality criteria in relation to this access.

Aims

The principle of the Cités des Métiers is to receive all publics, youth and adults alike, in the same site, and to provide them with personalised advice free of charge along with varied services (documentation, information days, training workshops, recruiting forums, etc.) on everything concerning their working life: orientation, employment, training, upgrading acquired experience, etc. The Cité des Métiers concept was developed to provide more appropriate responses to these multiple needs.

The Cité des Métiers' seal of approval is attributed to information, documentation and consulting centres that have developed a platform focused on user needs and that operate based on sharing the skills of professionals from different institutions with com-plementary missions, in order that the whole field of working life is covered.

Implementation

A Cité des Métiers is an integrated counselling and resource area for members of the public looking for points of reference, orientation and information about occupations and working life. In a context of profound change where the forms of work and employment contracts are constantly changing and where most people will no longer have the same job throughout their life, the goal of such an area is to help users to take a more active role in their working life.

Accordingly, a Cité des Métiers must rely on an alliance of skills and resources provided by partners with complementary missions. These partners combine their efforts to receive, inform and help the public. A Cité des Métiers develops action strategies based on three methods:

- interviews with the professionals of institutions with expertise in the orientation and working-life fields;
- self-serve documentation on employment, vocations and training; and
- information days, seminars and meetings organised by all partners.

Criteria that have to be satisfied to obtain and keep the Cité des Métiers seal of approval include:

- An area organised around user needs. The area and signs are designed to be ergonomic, with business hours adapted to all publics, an open and free access area, services focused on user needs, no institutional badge for counsellors, and no logo over thematic areas.
- A multi-partner and multi-purpose action setting: pooling services, resources, operations, training plan.
- A neutral support structure and management with a clear mandate. Any declaration of inten-

tion to create a Cité des Métiers must at least be signed by the main national institutions for working life (this would involve as a minimum the signatures of the public employment service and the Department of National Education). A study of local needs should project the number of people that will visit the Cité des Métiers and identify accordingly the number of professionals planned for each area.

- Link to the network web page. The phrase "Cité des Métiers network" should open a link to the network website's home page (www.reseaucitesdesmetiers.com). Reciprocally, a link is established to each Cité des Métiers website.

Outcomes

15 Cités des Métiers have been implemented in France. The seal of approval is the property of the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie. The Cité des Métiers network is an international association under French law, grouping all Cités des Métiers granted the seal of approval that are open or proposed. Its office's composition is international. Cités des Métiers legal status can be a public interest group (PIG), a non-profit organisation under the law of 1901 or any other legal entity that allows for separate governance from the contracting authorities. The Cité des Métiers in Paris is the biggest in France. For 160,000 visitors/year, the budget is 1.6 million euros, half of it in logistics costs granted by La Villette Museum, comprising an average cost of 10 euros per visit.

The Cité des Métiers is an example of pooling services. The most interesting aspect of the Cité des Métiers seems to be able to receive – with quality criteria – every person considering only his or her needs, without giving in principle priority to a specialised institution or service. The reflection subsists in how to merge the advantages of pooling services in "one place" with the need of proximity in all territories. This is a challenge for network organisation.

Case Study 8: Iceland (WP2)

Background

Guidance in the workplace has been successfully established in the ten continuing education centres (LLL centres) around the country. The continuing education centres are financed by the government directly, and partly through a contract between the government, the Icelandic Federation of Labour and the Confederation of Icelandic Employers.

Main objective

The objective is to reach low-qualified workers. The aim of the Icelandic government is that by the year 2020, 90% of the workforce will have further education. Currently 65% of the work force has not finished education beyond the compulsory level.

Target group

The target groups are low-qualified workers that have not finished upper secondary school and have neither formal vocational training nor matriculation examination; drop-outs, immigrants and other groups in a similar situation.

Implementation

Workplace guidance is an outreach programme for the identified target group, in each region. It is implemented in the following steps:

1. Career counsellors present ("sell") their expertise to employees and employers and offer individual counselling in the workplaces. This process of selling can take a long time and is based on trust between the different actors.
2. Workplace guidance can take place:
   a. in the workplace (in the canteen, in the store room, etc);
   b. in the continuing education centre;
   c. in another suitable place.
3. The counsellees are encouraged to enhance their education and skills.
4. New ways are being developed in providing career counselling to people with low qualification, one of them being APEL (accreditation of prior experiential learning). Another is co-operation with Directorate of Labour (PES) /job centres counselling to job seekers who are secured in the benefit system.

To start with, a contact is made with a workplace:

- Phonecalls – introduction.
- Informal meeting.
- Co-operation with unions and other stakeholders.
- A meeting with a workplace representative/executive where their role in the process is discussed.
- Also with the representative of the employees.

This leads to an introduction in the workplace which may be formal or informal. All counselees are offered individual interviews that take place in the work site. About 30% of people in the workplaces come to the continuing education centres for individual counselling interviews after a presentation of the guidance programme.

There is then follow up with the workplace (to encourage more chance of return to the workplace) and with the individuals (phonecalls or emails).

Monitoring and evaluation

The Education and Training Service Centre (ETSC) owned by the Icelandic Confederation of Labour and the Confederation of Icelandic Employers distributes the financial resources to the LLL centres. The ETSC also sets the objectives and monitors their implementation. The continuing education centres report outcome statistics (number of interviews) four times a year. The career counsellors in the centres meet four times a year to discuss their work. The progress and

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content of the counselling programme are reported once a year. The outcome criteria are all quantitative.

Outcomes

There are many ways to measure the results of workplace guidance. One is by the number of workers that seek counselling following a workplace visit. In the year 2008 counsellors presented their service to 3,802 workers (about 2% of the workforce). The total number of individual interviews was 3,657.

The number of individuals seeking guidance in 2008 was 2,341. 64% of these individuals had no formal qualifications. These comprised 2.3% of the 63,800 individuals in the workforce without a formal education.

The counsellors keep records of interviews and can compare numbers year by year. In 2010 the goal is 5,746 interviews. There is a good chance that the goal will be met and therefore there will be a 63% increase from the previous year.

Budget

In the year 2009 a total amount of 107 million ISK has been distributed to the LLL centres.

Innovative aspects

Marketing the services in companies was a new challenge and the support of the unions was a key factor in the process.

Success factors

For success it is important to base the guidance on a trusting relationship and an equal ground. The support of major stakeholders, the government, the unions and others is a major success factor. Without their official support and backing, it would be harder for counsellors to gain access to the employees.

Lessons learned

The ways companies and users of the service were approached were both formal and informal. It took time and effort to sell the idea of lifelong learning to these groups.

An unintended impact is that people are more aware of the services of career counsellors and seek their assistance and counselling on their own terms. Many of those visited were not familiar with the guidance services. They were also not aware of the educational opportunities available to them, nor the right they had to financial support from union educational funds.

With workplace guidance, the access to guidance has been widened.

A challenge for workplace guidance is how to keep track of data, how to share it and how to develop the service further. A database is being developed so that it will be possible to keep track of counselling and APEL.

Case Study 9: Austria (WP3)

Background

The National Lifelong Guidance Forum Austria (NLLGF-AT) is a policy platform for all forms of guidance and counselling in all relevant areas during all phases of life.

The initiative started in the early 2000, stimulated by the consultation process relating to the EU Memorandum on Lifelong Learning and by Austria's participation in the OECD Career Guidance Policy Review. Subsequently, Austria was the lead country of one of the two European Joint Actions projects on European Guidance Forums.

In 2007 a national Lifelong Guidance Strategy was published, the meta-objectives of which were:

- Orientation towards citizens' needs.
- Teaching/strengthening the basic competences for vocational educational and life planning.
- Guaranteeing wide and easy access to services.
- Linking with lifelong learning strategies.

Five additional priorities were defined:

- Priority 1: Implementation of basic competences in all curricula.
- Priority 2: Focus on process optimisation and support.
- Priority 3: Professionalisation of counsellors and trainers.
- Priority 4: Quality assurance and evaluation of provision, processes and structures.
- Priority 5: Widening access – creating provision for new target groups.

Participants

The members of NLLG-AT include:

- All relevant Ministries (Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture; Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection; Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth; Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research).
- Employers' and employees' organisations.
- Euroguidance.
- Non-Government institutions (e.g. Styrian Association for Education and Economics).
- Professional organisation for guidance and counselling.

A small steering team includes representatives of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture and of the Styrian Association for Education and Economics. At the end of each year a strategic workshop is held to monitor and evaluate the process during the year and to plan policy processes and practices for the coming year: all members of NLLGF-AT are involved in this workshop.

Aims

The aims of NLLG-AT include:

- The implementation of the Lifelong Guidance Strategy as an integrated part of the national Lifelong Learning Strategy, with the main focus at national level but also with support for implementation and development at regional and local levels.
- Influence on policy at national level, including implementation of issues concerning lifelong guidance in governmental programmes, in operational programmes (e.g. ESF) and in concrete measures, projects and other activities.
- Co-ordination and proactive co-operation between relevant projects with lifelong guidance elements, developing clusters of EU-funded projects to pilot innovative activities, with transfer to continuous strategic processes at national level.
- Concrete activities concerning the meta-objectives and priorities of the Lifelong Guidance

Strategy, in co-operation with special task groups (e.g. career guidance in schools; guidance for adults).

Implementation and outcomes

The main outcomes have been an increased awareness of topics related to lifelong guidance in relevant areas of policy and practice at national, regional and local levels.

A concrete outcome has been government decisions about the revised Lifelong Learning Strategy, including the Lifelong Guidance Strategy, in December 2010.

One of the most innovative processes has been the holistic integrative and proactive approach to the use of EU-funded programmes in order to support the improvement, implementation and integration of lifelong guidance activities at all levels (national, regional, local), in all areas (education, employment and labour, social affairs) and for all life phases (school, transition from school to work, adults), with attention to special target groups (e.g. people with special needs).

Success factors have included the development of a common understanding, trusting relationships, continuous communication, co-operation and co-ordination processes, acceptance of the particular situation of members in their own networks and backgrounds, combined with widening the common view of lifelong guidance as a part of lifelong learning, closely linked to other policies like employment and social affairs.

Case Study 10: Germany (WP3)

Establishing a National Guidance Forum as a bottom-up approach

Background

The German National Forum Guidance in Education, Career and Employment (nfb) was created following the 2002 OECD country review and the 2004 EU Resolution on Lifelong Guidance. After a national conference held in 2004, a steering committee established to develop the Forum secured the support of most of the stakeholders and actors in the guidance field including the ministerial authorities. Exchanges with other countries through participation in the EU Joint Actions programme (2004-06) to facilitate the establishment of national guidance forums supported the drafting and final agreement of a mission statement. Following an intensive bottom-up process involving all key actors and stakeholders, the National Guidance Forum was officially founded as a legal entity in 2006 by 21 members, including professional associations and guidance experts, the Federal Vocational Training Institute, organisations for further education, agencies and unions, and research institutes, with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as a supportive member.

Participants

The Forum currently has 51 members (26 organisations, 25 individuals) who support its mission and aims.

Being an incorporated legal association according to German Civil Law, the National Guidance Forum has standing rules of procedures which make sure that decisions are made democratically and that all members accept the Forum's goals. The Forum is constituted by three bodies. The members' General Assembly elects the Board of Directors. An Advisory Council (Kuratorium), which is assigned by the Board of Directors, monitors and accompanies the work of the Forum, particularly in relation to policy

development. The members of the Board of Trustees provide the link to the policy-makers and give advice on how the Forum can best realise its aims. The members of the Board of Trustees are representatives of the Federal Education and Labour Ministries, the Federal Employment Agency, a Member of Parliament, the social partners and the Permanent Conference of Education Ministers of the Länder. The General Assembly meets at least once a year and evaluates the progress and success of the Forum in relation to its aims and purposes. The Board provides an annual report to the General Assembly on the Forum's activities which can be discussed and monitored by all members. Throughout the year there are newsletters to the members. The use of the public webpage is another instrument to promote public interest in the Forum's activities.

Aims

The general aim of the National Guidance Forum is to promote the professionalism and quality delivery of guidance in education, in initial and further vocational training and in the employment sector in Germany. It aims to stimulate the development of a coherent guidance system which meets the different needs of users and to draft guidelines for quality and quality assurance which are accepted and recognised by all actors and stakeholders. Through its activities the Forum aims to support policy development at national and regional levels. It stands for the preservation of plurality and co-operation within the guidance scene. To guarantee transparency of and access to guidance services, the Forum considers that improved networking and co-ordination between the key actors in the different areas of guidance is indispensable.

Implementation

The National Guidance Forum – as a 'bottom-up' model – offers a platform to exchange knowledge and experience for all actors and stakeholders, practitioners, policy-makers and researchers in the field through workshops and conferences, its website and

through participation in projects and events. It promotes networking, co-operation and co-ordination between the different actors in the fields of guidance and education. Through experts' reports and statements as well as proposals, the National Guidance Forum takes part in policy development. In addition, international co-operation and networking is used to exchange knowledge and experiences for the development of educational and career guidance in Germany.

Outcomes

Specific results include:

- The Forum took part in the Federal Ministry of Education's Innovation Committee and stimulated recommendations concerning guidance policy development and the need for a study on guidance quality and professionalism.
- The National Forum is a member of the German ELGPN delegation. It organised three workshops and a European peer learning event on guidance quality within the ELGPN.
- A documentation booklet with statements on quality development needs from all stakeholders was published in 2008.
- A joint project to develop common agreed quality standards and counsellor competence profiles has been initiated in collaboration with the Institute for Education and Research of the University of Heidelberg, involving all relevant actors and supported by the Federal Ministry of Education.
- The Forum's website is a permanently updated professional communication platform which contains relevant European and international documents.
- In 2009 the Forum published a White Paper entitled "Corner-Stones of a Sustainable and Future-Oriented Guidance System in Germany" in which it calls for a coherent guidance system and proposes relevant reforms.

The members and the board work voluntarily. The running costs are covered by the member fees, donations and by project funding from the Ministry of Education and Research. This form of financing guarantees the cost-effectiveness of the work and its sustainability regardless of changing governments. Despite its low budget, the National Guidance Forum has successfully expanded and was able to set up an office in Berlin in 2009.

The co-operation of many different actors and stakeholders in the field of guidance is innovative in Germany, where guidance provisions are still fragmented. The bottom-up approach secures the involvement of all actors and also consideration of different professional and user interests.

Additional information

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Case Study 11: Hungary (WP3)

Background

In Hungary there has been no official central ownership of guidance issues. While guidance activities and development have been overseen by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (*Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium*), the Ministry of Education and Culture (*Oktatási és Kulturális Minisztérium*) is also a key actor in the field. However, the two ministries have not had a long-term strategic agreement on the issue. Moreover, neither the citizens nor employers have had a clear idea of the aims, methods and benefits of guidance, counselling and vocational orientation.

Career counselling has long-standing traditions in the Hungarian education system, but following the change of the economic and social regime in 1988– 93, the network of institutions with professionals dedicated exclusively to career counselling ceased to exist. The Public Employment Service (PES) established under the Employment Act of 1991 initially employed many experts who had worked in career counselling. But the two competent human policy ministries failed to conclude a long-term strategic agreement concerning the deployment, operation and evaluation of career counselling services.

Since the establishment of the ELGPN, however, national developments have pushed ahead. The Hungarian Lifelong Guidance Council (*Nemzeti Pályaorientációs Tanács, NPT*) was founded in January 2008, and in September 2008 a new national programme was launched in the framework of the Social Renewal Operational Programme (*Társadalmi Megújulás Operatív Programja, TÁMOP*) of the New Hungary Development Plan (*Új Magyarország Fejlesztési Terv, ÚMFT*) 2007–13. This includes the development of a new national lifelong guidance network. The Human Resources Governing Authority of the National Development Agency (*Nemzeti Fejlesztési Ügynökség*) also plays a central role in the governing system as a body responsible for the national HR developments. In addition, the national lifelong learning strategy (2005) as well as the National Reform Programme (2008–10) specify the development of career guidance activities.

Participants

The national council has 13 members. These include: the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (one member from the Department of Adult Education; one from the Department of Vocational Education and Training); the Ministry of Education and Culture (one member from the Secretariat of Public Education; one from the Secretariat of Higher Education); the National Education Authority; the National Employment and Social Office (two members); the National Institute for Public Education; the Hungarian Counselling Association; the National Interest Council (one member from the employers' side; one from the trade unions' side); and the National Institute of Vocational and Adult Education.

The head office of the PES (the National Employment and Social Office) provides the secretariat for the council. NESO is also responsible for the national lifelong guidance system development programme (SROP 2.2.2). The source of funds for the council is guaranteed by the Hungarian Labour Market Fund on a biannual basis.

Aims

The main aim of the council is to develop and promote a framework for lifelong guidance policy. Its work is strongly related to the national development programme for the lifelong guidance system in Hungary. This programme was designed for a 7-year period (2007–13) and covers 22.61 millions euros in total. Its sub-tasks include:

- Unifying the meaning of career guidance within the educational and employment regulations at national level.
- Developing a unified regulation for career guidance and appropriate financing mechanisms.
- Developing a common cross-sectoral understanding in the field of lifelong guidance.

- Developing a unified web portal for career counselling professionals and for other professionals in related fields (teachers, social workers, etc.).
- Upskilling the professional training for career guidance professionals.
- Widening access to career guidance services as a common project of different stakeholders.

The council also disseminates the outcomes of the ELGPN's work, and fosters research on evidence-based practice.

Implementation and outcomes

Under SROP 2.2.2, a number of new features in the field of career guidance have been implemented, including:

- Development of a new toolkit for career guidance professionals, including a web-based databank.
- Providing in-service training for 2,000 people working in related professions, and funding a 2-year postgraduate diploma for career guidance professionals, to reinforce existing regional networks.
- Developing a national and regional network of these professionals.

A new national guidance portal is envisaged, targeting young people and adults, with the aim of providing integrated, up-to-date and user-friendly information related to education and the labour market. The portal will also support the career guidance professionals/experts in their work.

In the final phase of the work (2012–14), the focus will be on the development of regional strategies and micro-regional cross-sectoral service plans.

Case Study 12: Latvia (WP3)

Background

When Latvia regained independence from the Soviet Union and underwent restructuring from a centrally-planned to a free-market economy, there was a lot of upheaval in the education and labour sectors. Vocational orientation was seen as a tool of the planned economy model and thus considered no longer relevant. However, increasing difficulty in matching labour resources to available jobs led the government to recognise the need for action. A task force was established to draw up recommendations. One of its conclusions was a lack of career information and counselling, which meant that individuals' educational choices were not based on realistic career prospects. The Ministry of Welfare was assigned the task of establishing a career development support system by developing policy, planning institutional infrastructure and involving relevant stakeholders. The Ministry of Welfare recognised that it did not have the resources to provide careers services to students planning their education: thus the Ministry of Education and Science was also involved in developing a concept paper for establishing a co-ordinated career support system across the education and labour sectors.

The new concept "Improvement of the Career Development Support System (CDSS)" was developed by the Ministry of Welfare in co-operation with representatives from three ministries (Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Economics, Ministry of Regional Development), the Association of Local Governments, social partner organisations, and guidance practitioners, and was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in March 2006. The concept stated that CDSS improvement should be viewed as one of the long-term priorities for Latvia to develop as a knowledge-based economy with a high added value. It included a mechanism to ensure better co-operation and co-ordination between key players in guidance and counselling at different levels, which would organise biannual meetings of relevant stakeholders as well as an annual conference.

Participants

The National Forum on guidance and counselling (*Karjeras attīstības atbalsta sistēmas Sadarbības padome*) was established in 2007. Its members include delegates from: the Ministry of Welfare; the Ministry of Education and Science; the Ministry of the Economy; the Ministry of Regional Development and Municipal Affairs; the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments; the Latvian Employers Confederation; the Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia; the Latvian Adult Education Association; and the State Agency of Social Integration. The Forum's secretariat is provided by the State Education Development Agency (*Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra*).

Aims

The general aims of the National Guidance Forum are:

- To promote quality delivery of guidance, in order to stimulate the further development of activities enabling individuals to identify their interests, abilities, skills and experience at any particular moment in their lifetime, so that they can make competent decisions about the choice of education and/or occupation, choose and manage their individual educational path, work and other areas where these skills and experience are acquired and/or used.
- To broaden access to guidance across the lifespan, and to foster innovative activities to modernise the guidance and counselling system which have been launched during recent years in Latvia at national level. In particular, to deal with the main challenges of the career guidance system as indicated in the concept paper: insufficient institutional co-operation and co-ordination of activities; insufficient information on labour market conditions and projections; low level of user-friendliness; fragmented sources of

information on education opportunities; lack of a programme at higher education level for training career guidance counsellors; insufficient provision of careers education in schools; minimal co-operation with employers concerning guidance issues; and lack of a quality-assurance mechanism in the career guidance system.

Implementation

The National Guidance Forum was established as:

- A platform for dialogue: where all actors and stakeholders meet to discuss and exchange knowledge, experience, information and viewpoints, and whose main sought outcome is the creation of a common understanding and the voluntary co-ordination of activities.
- An instrument for system development: a place for the development of concrete, practically-oriented elements within the framework of lifelong guidance (e.g. quality-assurance frameworks, training provision).

Outcomes

Meetings of the National Forum have been held twice annually as planned. The Forum has monitored whether the relevant Ministries have amended the normative acts within their competence according to the directives set out in the concept paper. Debates have taken place on the institutional structure of career guidance services in the labour sector, resulting in the integration of the Career Guidance State Agency into the Latvian Public Employment Service. Recommendations have been made regarding the improvement of career services within higher education and concerning the development of careers education within the education sector. As a result, the Law on Higher Education Institutions was amended to ensure provision of careers education at higher education institutions. The Forum regularly followed the progress of the ESF-funded national project "Fostering of Implementation of Career Education Programme in Schools" and assessed the final results. The National Forum is linked to the Latvian ELGPN delegation, and Forum members are informed about the activities, progress and results of the ELGPN at each Forum meeting.

Case Study 13: Slovenia (WP3)

Background

The Working Group on Lifelong Career Guidance was established by the Ministry of Education and Sport in December 2008. This was the second attempt to establish a national forum on career guidance. The first such forum was established in 2005 and operated until 2006. It prepared a proposal to the Ministry of Education and Sport and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs on how to place career guidance in their Operational Plans for 2007–13. The Ministry of Education and Sport has now devoted some funds to set up information counselling centres for adults, while the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs has allocated funds for a study review on career guidance in Slovenia.

Participants

The Working Group is strongly related to the ELGPN, and the three members of the Slovenian ELGPN team are all members of the group, functioning as a transmission mechanism between the network and the group. The chair of the group is from the University of Ljubljana. Other members come from: the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs; the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology; the Ministry of Education and Sport; the Slovene Institute for Adult Education; the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training; Employment Service Slovenia; Euroguidance Centre Slovenia; the Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy; and the School for Headteachers.

Aims

The main aims of the Working Group are as follows:

- To co-ordinate the policies of the ministries and other national organisations.
- To support the development of a common national guidance terminology.
- To develop a common plan for the implementation of a national lifelong guidance strategy.
- To develop a national co-ordination point for the concept of a comprehensive national lifelong guidance strategy.

Implementation

The activities of the Working Group have included:

- As a basis for development of the common plan for implementation of a national guidance strategy, an expert provided expertise to build a systematic approach on lifelong guidance. The results of this study were presented to policy-makers and practitioners at a conference in September 2009, attended by over 100 people from different sectors and different levels.
- The Working Group has prepared a document on a lifelong guidance strategy to be incorporated in a new White Book. This document has been sent to the National Co-ordination Group and to the sub-groups preparing the White Paper.
- The Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology is preparing documents to establish career centres at the university level. The Working Group will be asked to approve this document.
- The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs has prepared a document for establishing a national co-ordination point for career guidance. The project proposal was presented to the Working Group. The members were asked to give comments and to approve the project. The national co-ordination point will provide administrative support for the Working Group in the future.
- The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs is now preparing a new labour market law. The Working Group has reviewed the proposal and commented on it.

Case studies

- In conjunction with other ELGPN members, the Working Group is to organise a further national conference on career guidance for practitioners and decision-makers in September 2010.

Outcomes

Outcomes to date include:

- Lifelong guidance is now recognised as an important issue in the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs. The Ministry has approved the project for a national co-ordination point for career guidance which will be implemented in the period 2010-15 using ESF funds. The national co-ordination point will serve as a support for the Working Group and will disseminate and implement the decisions made by the group.

- The Working Group would like to reach an agreement regarding the aims of the initiative by policy-makers and other social partners in the next year or so.

- There is now a commonly agreed set of quality standards for lifelong career guidance in various sectors and offered by different providers.

- There is also now both policy and professional support for the development of a coherent model of career education in the general, vocational and higher education sectors.

Case Study 14: Denmark (WP4)

Background

The background of a national quality-assurance system dates back to April 2003, when the Danish parliament adopted a new act on guidance, which aimed to establish a more efficient guidance system with an improved quality-assurance system. On 1 August 2004, a simpler and more transparent guidance system was launched. The quality-assurance system should be seen in this light as one method to facilitate a transparent, accountable guidance system. Quality-assurance requirements have been part of the Act on guidance since its initial adoption. Part of the background for this is the EU 2004 Resolution, which identified the need for quality assurance as one area that should be the focus of a prioritised effort. The quality-assurance requirements have been extended gradually to include more indicators and areas of guidance.

Participants

The Ministry of Education is the main stakeholder of the quality-assurance system in the educational sector at a national level, as well as the main organisations for managers and guidance counsellors. The guidance centres and the educational institutions are the main stakeholders at a local level and are required to establish a quality-assurance system, which can be used to document activities, quality and effect on clients and society.

Aims

The aim of the system is to ensure that the contents of guidance services meet high-quality standards so that the guidance provided is of greatest possible benefit to the clients. The quality assurance system should contribute to achievement of the aims of the guidance reform and establish a feedback loop, which provides information to decision-makers on the scope, results and effects of guidance. This serves as foundation for further development and the col-

lected data will provide an evidence base for evaluating the guidance centres and for improving their services.

The main target groups are the guidance centres and the educational institutions, which are required to establish a quality-assurance system, so as to document activities, quality and effect on clients and society. It will give the centres/institutions a comprehensive view of their guidance services and serve as a foundation for further development. The main intention behind the method of quality assurance is to apply common guidelines and methods in order to create a basis for comparability between similar units (i.e. the guidance centres and the educational institutions) and a view over time about the performance of guidance services. By applying common guidelines, a systematic approach and method for the guidance centres and the educational institutions in their developing and measuring quality is introduced.

The Ministry of Education provides the guidance centres with a set of quality-assurance tools to support that they reach the Act's main targets through continuous evaluation of their activities. This includes tools to report quality level, results and effects of the activities. Several indicators are included in the quality-assurance system. When fully implemented, the system will include data on indicators, which will be comparable between different guidance and educational institutions and consequently will allow the main stakeholders to compare institutions at a national as well as a local level.

Among the indicators are user surveys, based on nationally representative samples of pupils and students responding to the same questionnaire. The user surveys are designed to provide information on user benefit of guidance in order to create the basis for a user-driven development. Based on inputs from guidance counsellors, the user surveys make it possible to compare and evaluate the user benefit of different types of guidance activities. Nationwide indicators based on data available from the administrative systems of the guidance and educational institutions as well as data from Statistics Denmark

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are included in order to be able to evaluate the guidance provided (see below).

Implementation

Development of the national quality-assurance system has taken place in co-operation between the Ministry of Education and the interested parties and main stakeholders such as managers and guidance counsellor organisations. Different working groups with representatives from the Ministry as well as the guidance counsellors and managers have been set up in order to draft manuals on how to introduce quality-assurance systems.

Generally, the work related to quality assurance is a task for each of the municipal or regional centres. However, annual reports and developments will be discussed in yearly reviews with the municipal councils and the Ministry respectively. The Ministry of Education has implemented the statistical indicators of the quality-assurance system. Furthermore, the Ministry provided the technical set-up for the surveys in 2009.

The quality-assurance system contains a monitoring clause in order to ensure that the guidance services meet the main objectives of the new Act and lead to the expected results. The evaluation process is to a large extent a task for the practitioners, due to their hands-on knowledge of the actual content of the guidance provided.

Outcomes

The quality-assurance system has resulted in an increase of valid data available on guidance. This includes user surveys with more than 45,000 respondents from all levels of education. Addition-

ally, the statistical material available on guidance has increased. Through data from Statistics Denmark, the Ministry produces statistics on completion and transition rates that can be used by the centres and institutions. This has generated a gradual increase in sharing of good experiences/good practice among practitioners. This development is still in process.

Developing a quality-assurance system in a complex area such as guidance has been a learning process, which will continue in the years to come. Other factors than guidance influence young people's pathways through the education system. An unambiguous connection can hardly be established between guidance services and the effect measured, such as, for instance, quick completion of an education. Moreover, the purpose of guidance is to make the young people self-reliant, which make the direct effect of guidance difficult to measure. On the other hand, it is possible to determine probable connections and establish indicators on guidance's input to the total effect.

A new political agreement aims at increasing the use of results-based management in the guidance centres. This is to be supported by a new database, which includes data from all relevant sources.

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Case Study 15: Germany (WP4)

Quality in career guidance – open process of co-ordination for quality development

Background

The German PES still is the largest and most important provider for career guidance, but career guidance services in Germany are increasingly heterogeneous and non-transparent. Many regional governments have set up programmes for educational guidance. All these publicly funded initiatives require agreed quality standards for guidance services. The German National Guidance Forum (nfb) has committed itself to develop quality and professionalism of career guidance in Germany. The project presented below had funding from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (FMER) and is being carried out from October 2009 to November 2011 in collaboration with the University of Heidelberg.

Participation

Target groups include guidance professionals, service providers; policy makers, funding bodies and users

Aims

The overall aim of the project is to initiate an open process of co-ordination among important actors and stakeholders in career guidance, to agree on:

- A common understanding of career guidance.
- A catalogue of indispensable quality standards for career guidance delivery.
- A competence profile for career guidance practitioners with recommendations for initial/ further education/training of professionals.
- A Quality Development Framework to support service providers in their quality management systems including tools and guidelines for implementation.

- Recommendations for a sustainable, long-term implementation strategy for quality standards and the Quality Development Framework.

The working methods of the "open process of co-ordination" involve:

- Two parallel task groups.
- An intermediate peer learning meeting with guidance practitioners.
- An Advisory Board representing policy makers and stakeholders from federal and regional level which accompanies the project, evaluates results, etc.
- The *nfb* as project co-ordinator, securing the overall process and the involvement of relevant policy-makers and stakeholders, and disseminating information and results via website, newsletter, press releases, presentations at conferences etc.

Implementation

The project aims at a developmental process to define and agree on quality standards, a competence profile, and a quality development framework in career guidance, including a piloting phase to evaluate the feasibility and acceptability of the commonly agreed standards and the quality-assurance framework. The implementation itself – either the adoption or the adaptation of already existing standards and quality assurance systems – is not a task of the project. The results of the project are to be presented in 2011 at a nationwide conference, and through publications including a handbook, and a website with tools for implementation.

An evaluation of the outcomes is part of the project. The catalogue of quality standards and the Quality Development Framework will be piloted in around 10 guidance institutions, supported and evaluated by the University of Heidelberg.

Case studies

Outcomes

As the project started in October 2009, no specific results can be reported yet.

Achievements

- Cost effectiveness. It is expected that the increase in service quality will require more investment in the service delivery and staff training. This investment will however reduce the individual and societal costs caused by wrong career decisions, low-skilled labour, mismatch in the labour market, unemployment benefits, etc.
- The project is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research for 27 months (1.10.2009-31.11.2011) with a grant of almost 580,000 euro.
- Innovative aspects:
  - Commonly agreed standards in career guidance are established for the first time ever in Germany (as opposed to sectoral approaches).
  - The open process of co-ordination initiated by an NGO *(nfb)* and funded by the Federal Government is in itself an innovative initiative combining strategic (policy) development and civil society needs
- Success factors: involving actors and stakeholders from the guidance sectors

- Strengths and weaknesses:
  - Strengths refer to the strong need expressed by professionals and users and by government officials to establish commonly agreed quality standards in career guidance
  - Weaknesses: The project will not be able to alter the split up responsibilities for career guidance in Germany or legislation in this field. Thus a joint procedure to establish common standards will rely on the commitment of governments and other funding authorities, as well as service providers and stakeholders.

Additional information

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Case Study 16: Greece (WP4)

Background

This is the first system for quality assurance of guidance services in Greece, aiming at initial and continuous evaluation of public and private guidance services in both the education and employment sectors. It was developed by EKEP (National Center for Vocational Orientation), the National Euroguidance Centre, which is an executive body of System 6 of ESSEEKA "System of Counselling, Vocational Guidance and Connection with the Labour Market" (Law 3191/2003) and a member of the ELGPN network.

The Greek model system for quality assurance in guidance services is a top-down model based on the British Matrix standard. It consists of 6 groups of benchmarks: (1) Leadership; (2) Organising – planning; (3) Guidance practitioners – human resources; (4) Client satisfaction; (5) Delivery of services; and (6) Premises and equipment. Of these, (1) connects with the policy development level; (2), (3) and (6) connect with the organisational level; while (4) and (5) link to the practice level.

The diversity of guidance services in Greece, both public and private, and the absence of a legal framework for the requirements that these services should fulfil, necessitated the creation of a system for quality assurance of guidance services.

Participants

The participants in the initiative were: EKEP, IEKEP (the company that developed the system), the Greek Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning & Religious Affairs – Directorate of Vocational Guidance and Educational Activities (SEPED) and the Greek Manpower Employment Organization (OAED), the official public authority responsible for the provision of Counselling and Vocational Guidance services in the employment sector which operates the Centres for Promotion to Employment (KPAs), that provide vocational guidance services to the unemployed at local level.

Aims

- Set common quality standards in guidance in the public and private sectors.
- Develop know-how in quality assurance for guidance services in Greece.
- Create a legal framework for monitoring and evaluation of guidance services.
- Raise the quality of guidance provision in Greece for the sake of its citizens and protect them from low-quality uncertified guidance services.

Target group

Public guidance services of all levels of the education sector (primary, secondary and tertiary); all types of VET sector (initial and continuous); employment sector; private guidance services; local government services.

Methods

1. Bibliographical research.
2. Development of benchmarks, quality indicators and documents of proof by a scientific committee of guidance counsellors.
3. Pilot application in public guidance services.
4. Gathering feedback from the services themselves.
5. Revision of benchmarks and indicators.
6. Consultation with ministries and other responsible authorities.

Implementation

Firstly, EKEP conducted a study of "International systems for quality assurance in guidance services" which: (1) referred to the most important international quality management systems like ISO 9000 etc.; (2) described the most well-known quality-assurance systems for career guidance like the UK Matrix quality standard and the Canadian Blueprint for Life/Work Designs; and (3) presented the systems developed for the quality assurance of various public-sector services in Greece, e.g. the system for the evaluation of the continuous education and

training centres of the Ministry of Employment. The fourth part of the study proposed a model system suitable for quality assurance in guidance services in Greece. The system described the values, the quality indicators and the documents of proof according to the theory of the quality circle. All indicators produce indications for quality development. According to the underpinning theory, the values produce indicators, the indicators produce indications, and the indications produce evidence or measuring tools.

The next phase was piloting in public guidance services, e.g. the University of Piraeus Career Office, a Counselling and Guidance Centre (KESYP) in Piraeus, and a Centre for Promotion to Employment (KPA). The aim of the pilot was to inform the services about the system for quality assurance and to get their feedback concerning the values and quality indicators of the system.

Procedure

The procedure for initial evaluation or continuous monitoring of a guidance service is:

1. The service submits a portfolio which contains all the elements that prove the implementation of the quality system.
2. A team of external evaluators visits the service and conducts the evaluation on the spot, following a specific written form.
3. The evaluators are asking to see specific evidence and documentation which proves the observance of each criterion.
4. A quality certificate of conformity is awarded to each service reaching the desired marking.
5. Data of certified services are entered in a special register.
6. An electronic platform supports the whole procedure from applications to results of each evaluation

Outcomes

The cost effectiveness is high since raising the quality of guidance provision in Greece will ultimately result in lower unemployment rates, higher mobility of citizens, better access to information and better career opportunities.

Budget

The project was co-financed by the Ministry of Education and the European Social Fund program). The overall budget was 40,000 euros.

Innovative aspects

The system includes values such as: "The Service investigates client satisfaction by the services provided and the staff and makes use of the findings" and a mechanism for making use of client feedback (client satisfaction surveys, follow-up activities, etc.).

Evaluation is a delicate matter. Sometimes services were suspicious of the system. They thought that they were being criticised and were afraid that the evaluation wouldl reveal drawbacks and negative points of their functioning.

Receiving feedback from guidance services at the development phase of the quality-assurance system is a major strength of the system.

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Case Study 17: Hungary (WP4)

The Hungarian LLG system development: quality issues in career guidance

Background

At a policy level in Hungary there is still no official central ownership of career guidance issues. While guidance activities and development are overseen by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (*Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium)*, the Ministry of Education and Culture *(Oktatási és Kulturális Minisztérium*) is also a key actor in the field. However, the two ministries do not have a long-term strategic agreement on this issue. At the same time, neither the citizens nor the employers have a clear idea of the aims, methods or the benefits of guidance, counselling and vocational orientation.

Since the establishment of the ELGPN at EU level, national developments have pushed ahead. The Hungarian LLG Council (*Nemzeti Pályaorientációs Tanács, NPT*) was founded in January 2008 and in September of the same year a new national programme was launched in the framework of the Social Renewal Operational Programme (*Társadalmi Megújulás Operatív Programja, TÁMOP*) of the New Hungary Development Plan (*Új Magyarország Fejlesztési Terv, ÚMFT*) 2007–13).

In career counselling activities at an organisational level, Hungary has long-standing, well-researched traditions within the education system. Starting with the Government Resolutions No.2029/1967 and No.1029/1971 (VII.3), a National Career Counselling Institute (Hungarian abbreviation: OPTI) and a National Career Counselling Council (later Committee) were formed, under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour. Service delivery was provided by County Career Counselling Institutes. In the early 1980s, the system gradually lost its autonomy, with the county institutes merging with institutes of pedagogy. Nearly all the professional knowledge was lost; there were just about 40 guidance professionals in the whole country before the change of the economic and social regime. At the time of the change of regime, in 1988-93, career counselling functions had no owner, which has left its mark on the Hungarian system to date.

Aims and targets

One of the main aims of the National Council (NPT) is to develop and promote a framework for lifelong guidance practice. The first, already available product of this task is a protocol, a guideline set for practitioners, working for the new counselling network. The Social Renewal Operational Program (SROP 2.2.2) supports development in the areas of IT and methodology. In the area of IT development, the development of a new national guidance portal is envisaged, targeting the youth, adults and professionals/experts, with the aim of providing integrated, up-to-date and user-friendly information related to education and the labour market. The webpage would also offer a portal for the career guidance professionals, where they could reach all the information and tools regarding the project.

Implementation

SROP 2.2.2 is implementing numerous new features in the field of career guidance. The main item within the first two-year period is the new National Career Guidance Portal (NPP). The new LLG organisation (Életpálya-tanácsadók hálózata) is promoting a web-based databank, providing in-service training for 2,000 people working in related professions, and also providing a two-year post-graduate diploma for career guidance professionals, so widening the network of trained professionals.

The National Council has already revised the legal background of career counselling services, with the aim to create new suggestions for synergy in the regulations: the citizens should have access to services at all life stages, in all life circumstances (easily accessible, within of acceptable distance in each region.)

A second research summarised the core competences of career professionals. The matrix created

on the basis of the findings has the aim to help professionals to find their correct place based on their acquired competences, in a multilevel career guidance system,

The third research dealt with the exploration and presentation of economic returns from career guidance services (SROI model), as well as their opportunity costs, by the examination of guidance through an economic approach. Both everyday experiences and research findings can confirm the utility of guidance; however, its verification and quantification are far from easy. The focus of the analysis has been on the economic impact of career orientation, which is closely linked to the issues of measurement and monitoring. In the study, the possibilities of indicator measurement are being explored, and good practices in their design and in the use of benchmarking are being presented. Finally, the issue of quality assurance and its international experiences are being looked at and measurement methods for the Hungarian practice are beingproposed.

The aim of the fourth study was to create a base of "soft variables" or psychological variables for economic and social return of investment analysis. This base was constructed upon the psychological effect indicators of lifelong guidance. The research found six indicator dimensions that seemed universal through studies, types of counselling activities and outcome variables. These six dimensions are: self-esteem, coping, career maturity and awareness, life skills, locus of control, and decision-making competence. These factors are dimensions, containing several possible specific variables. Within the framework of the study, there are some recommendations for the measurement tools for these dimensions, and an open space for further research on investment analysis and on evidence-based practice.

Outcomes

The identification and separation of career orientation activities and of the costs belonging to each activity are not easy with the SROI method. Even if the separation of the services (or their majority) suc-

ceeds, the measurement of costs related to each of these separated career orientation activities encounters further barriers. There are few and uncertain data, and the decomposition of totals, which belong to the surveyed activity only in part, is difficult. Problems of definitions, too, render the collection of data complicated. The result of investigations has been that there is not any single nationwide quality-assurance or monitoring system that would assess the activities and services of the continuously developing career orientation system.

Recently, Hungary initiated a client satisfaction measurement process, as a pilot project within the new Életpálya-tanácsadó hálózat (LLG practitioner network), and an impact measurement research project, with a six-month longitudinal research part.

Achievements

No specific results can yet be reported on the impact indicators.

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths refer to the strong need expressed by professionals as well as by government officials to show the long-term effect of career guidance activities. Hungary already has a counselling protocol, and a competence framework, and is working on a set of web-based tools to help the counselling process itself (e.g. job search and retention behaviour scale, transferable skills survey, motivation and value-orientation questionnaire, abilities, skills questionnaire, employability scale, competence inventory, mobility survey, working modes questionnaire, work preference and values survey, unemployment crisis survey, work experience and working modes questionnaire, recreational interests questionnaire, personal and environmental resources survey, learning resources survey, entrepreneurial resources survey).

Hungary has also a set of variables, or impact dimensions, which could be important to be measured in a longitudinal research setting, to see the impacts of career activities on the personal level.

Weaknesses include: the project will not be able to alter the split responsibilities for career guidance; and there is still a need for a common legal framework, revised training possibilities for career guidance professionals, and a stable financing model.

Additional information

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Documents and publications

1. Policy statement concerning the development of a national system of lifelong guidance/counselling harmonised with EU requirements.
2. Tibor Bors Borbély-Pecze et al.: Unified Guidelines for Guidance Practitioners.
3. Hungarian LLG Council: Executive summaries and abstracts. 2009.

Case Study 18: Portugal (WP4)

Background

The present initiative stands as the first articulated attempt to create a fully comprehensive system of quality assurance for guidance activity in Portugal. Although previous measures existed, providing the quality of instruments and methods used in PES-supplied guidance, as well as basic training for professionals, there was a clear need for a more integrated instrument, with adequate monitoring tools. The national public employment service, IEFP, has taken the initiative in establishing a national standard, which will also account for the visions produced in a national guidance forum. Entities enrolled in the forum will include: the Portuguese Ministry of Education; universities undertaking research on guidance; professional/scientific associations; inter-national structures; users' associations; labour unions; employers's associations.

Aims and targets

The objectives of the initiative are:

- Gaining efficacy and efficiency in guidance provision through implementation and constant check of clear standards, measures and practices.
- Increasing the autonomy of citizens in establishing critical learning and labour pathways, both by competence building and ease of access.
- Sponsoring innovation through systematic research on critical factors in guidance for employability and job stability/success.

The end target of the system is the guidance user, although we can also consider both guidance professionals and employment/educational service managers as being targeted by the measures undertaken.

The system is implemented by understanding guidance activity as part of a value chain and acting upon the phases of that chain, considering inputs, process

and outputs. Primarily is considered the intervention of the PES and its creation of public value and economic spillovers.

Implementation

The system has a national scope and is sustained in an incremental and progressive logic. Firstly, its scope is the operation of the PES services, with a test-run in some of its main job and VET centres. Secondly, the initiative should be generalised to the full PES network. A third step should enable the adjusted diffusion of the system to different sectors and networks, namely education and private operators. As early as step two, the standard is to be shared and discussed in a national forum of relevant stakeholders.

Some key measures to undertake are:

- Set periodic updates and testing of diagnosis tools, guidance methodologies, information supports, on-line contents/tools.
- Improvement of registry and information transitions that allows for interchangeability of user information while guaranteeing users' rights.
- Improvement of accessibility by development of comprehensive e-guidance tools and the improvement of information to disabled people (paper and online) and immigrant users.
- Set evaluation and update of guidance professionals' competences, with strict standards and ethical conduct.
- Development of adequate tools for the follow-up of guidance users through pre- and post-intervention surveying.
- Balanced score-cards for guidance management and multi-level modelling of supervised factors.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are primarily undertaken by the Guidance Directorate of IEFP in articulation with the forum stakeholders. A monitoring mechanism has been established, measuring the efficacy of

the planned measures affecting inputs and process as well as a system of indicators aimed at measuring impact variables. Input variables are monitored through direct control of measures and by user surveys. Process/organisation variables are monitored by tools assessment, management surveying and technical staff surveying. Outputs are monitored by follow-up of PES users (for users with and without guidance: job and educational success, self-efficacy, mobility and queuing, entrepreneurship skills), defining samples that have as basic statistical unit the job/training centres. A balanced scorecard has been defined with all the assessment dimensions deemed relevant. A statistical modelling process is being developed to enable research-based adjustments to guidance policy.

Outcomes

Specific results: only planning and tools have been developed.
Cost effectiveness: progressive implementation and tight instrument control should allow for low costs of project and improvement of the present cost-result ratio in provision.
Innovative aspects: research-based approach.

Additional information

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Case studies