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REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND RESEARCH

EUROPEAN GUIDANCE WEEK 2017
EU Presidency Conference on
Lifelong Guidance Policy and Practice
27th – 28th September 2017

Estonian History Museum, Maarjamäe Palace, Tallinn, Estonia

BACKGROUND PAPER



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1 Preamble¹

1.1 The participants of the Finnish EU Presidency conference on lifelong guidance policies in November 2006 agreed in that meeting to organise biennial EU-level policy conferences. Subsequent conferences have been organised in Lyon, France (2008), in Zaragoza, Spain (2010), in Larnaca, Cyprus (2012), in Rome, Italy (2014) and in Haarlem, the Netherlands (2016). Thus, the 7th European conference on lifelong guidance policies will be organised in conjunction with the European Guidance Week September 26-29, 2017 in Tallinn, Estonia. The meetings are planned for the Estonia's Presidency of the Council of the European Union, and organised by Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, Cedefop and the Foundation Innove.

1.2 The 7th EU Presidency conference on LLG policies is focusing on the innovative information and communication technologies (ICT) and future co-operation in the field of lifelong guidance.

2 Policy context

2.1 During the last ten years Lifelong Guidance is referred to in a direct (or indirect) manner in a number of Resolutions / Recommendations adopted by the Council and the Parliament with regard to unemployment, early school leaving, adult learning, early and school education, higher education, VET, entrepreneurship, and skills policies to improve the match of skills demand and supply. In order to secure professional transitions² in the current labour market, the initiative for a European Pillar of Social Rights³ sets out recommendations that active labour market policies, such as counselling, training or active job searching, can help to increase employment opportunities for jobseekers and improve job-matching.

¹ Chapters 1-4 are produced by Mr. John McCarthy, Mr. Raimo Vuorinen and Ms. Margit Rammo, chapters 5-13 including the data analyses by Ms. Jaana Kettunen and Mr. Raimo Vuorinen.

² European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/secure-professional-transitions_en.pdf

³ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/towards-european-pillar-social-rights_en

2.3 Lifelong guidance refers to a range of activities⁴ that enable citizens of any age, and at any point in their lives, to: identify their capacities, competences and interests; make meaningful educational, training and occupational decisions; and manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are learned and/or used. Lifelong guidance is provided in a range of settings: education, training, employment, community, and private.

2.4 The Council Resolution of 21st November 2008 on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies⁵ invites Member States to make use of four guiding principles to support the lifelong career transitions of citizens: encourage the lifelong acquisition of career management skills; facilitate access by all citizens to guidance services; develop the quality assurance of guidance provision; and encourage co-ordination and co-operation among various national, regional and local stakeholders.

2.5 The New Skills Agenda confirms the role of guidance either as essential supporting service to youth adults and at-risk groups or as user and promoter of European programmes and tools (e.g. European labour market intelligence, Europass). The Agenda also highlights the need for more support for learner's mobility. International mobility is acknowledged to contribute strongly to boosting employability by helping citizens to acquire and develop the skills and competences needed to engage in further learning and work. Guidance has an important role to play also in this context.

2.6 The Youth Guarantee⁶ calls for the need to offer early school-leavers and low-skilled young people pathways to re-enter education and training, or second-chance education programmes to enable them to obtain qualifications. The Youth Guarantee

⁴ Examples of such activities include information and advice giving, counselling, competence assessment, mentoring, advocacy, and teaching career decision-making and career management skills. A variety of terms is used in different countries to describe these activities. These terms include educational, vocational or career guidance, guidance and counselling, occupational guidance, and counselling. To avoid ambiguity, the term 'guidance' is used in the text to identify any or all of these forms of provision; the term 'lifelong guidance', parallel to 'lifelong learning', indicates the aspiration to make such guidance available on a lifelong basis.

⁵ [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32016H1224\(01\)&from=EN#ntr8-C_2016484EN.01000101-E0008](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32016H1224(01)&from=EN#ntr8-C_2016484EN.01000101-E0008)

⁶ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF>

also recommends that Member States ensure that young people have access to information about the services and support available to them, by strengthening cooperation between employment services and career guidance providers.

2.7 The Council Resolution on a Renewed Agenda for Adult Learning (2011)⁷ called for, inter-alia, the development of effective lifelong guidance systems, as well as integrated systems for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in order to support adult learning in all its dimensions at national level. It invited Member States to designate a national co-ordinator to facilitate cooperation with the other Member States and the Commission in implementing the adult-learning agenda, and invited the Commission to ensure complementarity and coherence between the policy initiatives undertaken in accordance with the Resolution and those developed in the context of other relevant policy processes; to improve data collection on adult learning as part of the updated coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks; and to pursue and intensify cooperation on adult learning issues with relevant international organisations. The Commission (DG EAC) subsequently established the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE) to support information sharing. The current focus of the Working Group on Adult Learning (2016-2018) is on policies for adult learning in the workplace for low and medium skilled workers. Workplace and non-workplace provision of lifelong guidance support this policy development and implementation.

The Upskilling Pathways Recommendation⁸ explicitly indicates the need for Member States to develop adequate career guidance system to support low qualified adults in acquiring skills and qualifications. It emphasises its organic role and its complementary to validation processes, outreach initiatives and its essential support to informed vocational choices. The current European Commission's proposal for a Long Term Unemployed Recommendation also indicates career guidance and counselling as an essential support mechanism for the establishment of individual labour market reintegration plans.

⁷ [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32011G1220\(01\)&from=EN](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32011G1220(01)&from=EN)

⁸ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1224>

2.8 The Riga Conclusions on European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training (2015)⁹ provided some lifelong guidance policy options as medium term (2015-2020) deliverables. These included integrating guidance and counselling services provided by both education and employment sectors for both I-VET and C-VET, and ensuring greater institutional synergies between I-VET and C-VET providers (at regional, national and European levels), guidance and employment services and validation centres, etc.

2.9 In May 2017, the Commission presented a proposal for a Council Recommendation on the follow-up of the career of university graduates and vocational training institutions. In this way, better and comparable data about the career paths of graduates shall be made available across Europe - a valuable information tool and resource for educational and vocational guidance as well for education planning. The proposal will soon be discussed in the Council. While the Commission has completed a feasibility study (impact assessment) for the higher education sector, the latter is lacking in the field of vocational education and training¹⁰.

2.10 The Council (Education/Youth) conclusions on entrepreneurship in education and training¹¹, 2013, invited Member States to encourage synergies between entrepreneurship education and training and career guidance to support the acquisition of the entrepreneurship key competence and to reflect venture creation as a career opportunity. Furthermore Member States were invited to promote and support student venture initiatives, for example by encouraging the creation of appropriate learning environments and the provision of sound careers guidance at all levels of education and training. Subsequently, the European Parliament Resolution "Promoting youth entrepreneurship through education and training"¹², 2015, proposed that entrepreneurship, including social entrepreneurship, should be integrated in the

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/2015-riga-conclusions_en.pdf

¹⁰ European Parliament: New Skills for Europe: State of Implementation. Briefing. Policy Department A: Economic and Scientific Policy, September, 2017

https://www.linkedin.com/redir/redirect?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Eeuropa%2Eeu%2FRegData%2Fetudes%2FBRIE%2F2017%2F607334%2FIPOLE_BRI%282017%29607334_EN%2Epdf&urlhash=ZlhW&t=tracking_anet

¹¹ [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52015XG0120\(01\)&from=EN](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52015XG0120(01)&from=EN)

¹² <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2015-0292+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

training of teachers and career advisers. In terms of the entrepreneurship education of youth, it proposed that modules in basic finance, economics and business environment should be integrated into school curricula, and should be accompanied by mentoring, tutoring and career guidance for students. It called on the Member States to promote entrepreneurship as a positive career option in the career advice provided within secondary and tertiary education, and to tackle the negative stigma surrounding entrepreneurship as a career option which is prevalent in some Member States. The Resolution called on the Commission to develop methodological support and tools to made be available to national education systems in the area of entrepreneurship education and training, and to coordinate and promote the exchange of best practices between Member States.

3 Co-operation in lifelong guidance policy

3.1 The European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) set up in 2007 under the auspices of the Resolution produced a number of common European reference tools for policy development and implementation. It also developed a number of Concept Notes connecting lifelong guidance issues with European policy priorities (e.g. Youth Guarantee, Early School Leaving).¹³

3.2 These European reference tools have inspired national developments. A survey at the end of the funding period in 2015 demonstrated considerable impact of structured European policy co-operation: 17 EU member countries (AT, CY, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, HR, HU, IS, IT, NO, PL, PT, RO, SK) report that the ELGPN work has had significant influence on national policies on lifelong guidance, and all other countries list concrete examples of some impact. Further, most member-countries have established National Guidance Fora or other national co-ordination mechanisms to better co-ordinate existing services and strategy development in often fragmented guidance landscapes. Many of these mechanisms were in a building-up phase when funding ended in 2015.

¹³ The outputs of ELGPN can be viewed on the following link: <http://www.elgpn.eu/publications>

3.3 As a conclusion to nearly a decade of fruitful work, the ELGPN released in 2015¹⁴ Guidelines for Policies and Systems Development for Lifelong Guidance. These established agreed principles between MS representatives, regarding standards of service in diverse educational, training and social sectors, as well as transversal aspects such as practitioner competence, career information and ICT. The guidelines had contributions from DG EAC and DG EMPL of the Commission, EUParl Policy Unit A, Cedefop, ETF and partner associations.

3.4 The Euroguidance Network provides another concrete structure for co-operation in the field of lifelong guidance on EU level. Euroguidance was established in 1992 to promote and support transnational learner mobility. It supported ELGPN during 2007-2015, disseminating information about tools and initiatives on national level. During 2016-2017 Euroguidance offered arenas for further co-operation in lifelong guidance by supporting mutual exchange between stakeholders at pan-European events. Euroguidance supports the upgrading of guidance practitioner competences in learner mobility and raises their awareness of European initiatives and trends in the fields of education and employment, thus developing the European dimension in guidance and contributing to the internationalisation of guidance services.

4 Need for a long-term strategic perspective at EU level

4.1 ELGPN managed to achieve significant progress both in the development of common EU reference tools and in inspiring reforms at national level. It is clear from the work of ELGPN that structured European co-operation in lifelong guidance policy and systems development has had and still has a significant role to play to stimulate and continue national developments through mutual learning opportunities for national policy developers and national careers service managers. Unfortunately, EU co-operation in lifelong guidance policy and systems development ceased at a critical time when the EU Guidelines/benchmarks for lifelong guidance policies and systems had finally been agreed and published by the Member State representatives of ELGPN.

¹⁴ ELGPN [European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network]. (2015). *The Guidelines for Policies and Systems Development for Lifelong Guidance: A Reference Framework for the EU and for the Commission*. Saarijärvi, Finland. Retrieved from: <http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/elgpn-tools-no-6-guidelines-for-policies-and-systems-development-for-lifelong-guidance>

The absence of such co-operation since 2015 militates against the achievement of the quality guidance provision sought in the EU Council and EU Parliament Resolutions.

4.2 The Commission has an array of possible models of structured European co-operation to draw from based on its knowledge and experience of EU expert groups, expert networks, Member State-led, Commission-led etc. so it is not intended here to propose a specific model. However, it is clear from the content of both EU Council and Parliament Resolutions and Recommendations and from the experience of ELGPN that lifelong guidance policy development involves a range of actors (different ministries) and services at national level and that this has to be taken into consideration in any future EU level co-operation mechanism.

4.3 While this consideration may appear quite challenging to any Directorate General of the Commission, the experience of the ELGPN, especially in the development of policy and systems benchmarks that apply to all settings (education, training, employment) in which guidance is provided, shows that it can be done, and is both necessary and strategic. The achievement of the goals of recent EU Council and Parliament Resolutions and Recommendations in education, training and employment, demands that such co-operation be re-established as quickly as possible and on a sustainable basis.

4.4 The two-day Estonian 2017 EU Presidency Conference on Lifelong Guidance Policy and Practice provides an opportunity to discuss both the progress on the use of ICT in guidance and on the future options on structured European co-operation in lifelong guidance systems and policy development from these two perspectives:

- Guidance community is aware of innovative guidance practices using technology and current status of LLG policy development in Europe;
- Guidance community is actively involved in defining ways how innovative and digital guidance contributes to secure and inclusive Europe.

5 Data collection on the use of ICT in guidance and future EU co-operation in guidance

5.1 The Estonian Presidency asked countries to prepare a national response to the Presidency conference themes and current challenges and potential response strategies. The countries reflected, how co-operation should be shaped and improved both on the EU and on national level in order to achieve the goals of recent EU Council and Parliament Resolutions and Recommendations in education, training and employment in:

- 1) Innovative practices and peer learning – how can enhanced co-operation and exchange improve policy and practice?
- 2) Evidence and accountability of guidance practice – how can better monitoring and evidence be brought upon to improve service delivery?
- 3) Competence of practitioners – how can the profile of practitioners be raised regarding competences, attitudes and knowledge?
- 4) Integrated, lifelong support – how can integrated, holistic support to citizens be created?
- 5) Access for the client groups with specific needs – how can create coverage for the ones outside the system be improved?
- 6) Better mobility and labour market functioning – how can guidance evolve to help improve labour market outcomes?

The following chapters synthesise responses received from 27 EU Member States (AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, IT, LV, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK, SI and UK) and from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia and Turkey. The synthesis and references to policies and practices are based on the data provided by the Member States for this EU Presidency conference only. References are made to previous EU Presidency policy conferences, to activities of the European Network for Public Employment Services (PES Network) or to the recent International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policies 18-21 June 2017 in Seoul, Korea¹⁵, in cases there are parallel recommendations. This synthesis will feed the discussions during the event and also the new Cedefop database on national guidance systems (CareersNet).

¹⁵ See also: <http://iccdpp2017.org>

6 Innovative practices and peer learning

Pre-conference question: How could co-operation support: introduction and improvement of labour market information in careers services; development of outreach and community based methods; increased collaboration and integration with enterprises and enterprise processes (HR based); peer support and learning among practitioners?

6.1 Co-operation support

6.1.1 Most of the countries emphasised that their responses are based on consequent and long- term development in the last years. The future development at national level is not “starting from the scratch” but building on an existing system of co-operation on at national and regional level. The different forms of co-operation in most cases are built on national or regional sustainable lifelong guidance forums or other representative structures which were established during the last ten years during the joint action programmes 2004-06 or during ELGPN Work Programmes 2007-15 (e.g. AT, BG, BiH, HR, FI, DE, LV, LT, MT and NO). A national forum brings together all relevant partners in the field of education, training, employment, youth and social inclusion, including relevant ministries, agencies and experts. The role of employer organisations, sector councils, skills councils, chambers of commerce, trade unions and other community members were emphasised in developing outreach guidance services.

6.1.2 Another catalyst for national co-operation comes from European level benchmarking activities within the European network of Public Employment Services (e.g. DE, HR, SK) or the Euroguidance Network (e.g. CZ, EL, LV, LT, MT, RS and SE). National Euroguidance centers have shared information on good practices in guidance and organised seminars, common events or awareness raising activities around the topic. Within the framework of a Benchmarking initiative, the PES Network has promoted qualitative assessment of the current guidance services. The aim of these audits has been on the identification of examples of good practice and on providing feedback as well as specific recommendations for the future.

6.1.3 Common development and collection of information has also been achieved through EU funded projects on the use of LMSI and ICT, such as EMPLOY ID (e.g. BiH, HR, SI and UK) and GOAL (BE).

6.1.4 The countries indicate also concrete measures to promote co-operation to introduce and improve LMSI in career services using public-private partnerships. A key element of these initiatives is the involvement of employers in the design and implementation of the services or in providing opportunities for work-based learning experiences (e.g. AT, EL, LV, FI, MT). The employers can be engaged in national committees preparing national policy documents or legislation. They can contribute to the development of curricula for different educational levels and for training programmes of career practitioners. They can provide placements for students, teachers and career practitioners or offer themselves career services.

6.1.5 The national associations of guidance professionals can provide a sounding board in the development of user-friendly labour market information systems and they can foster peer learning, design innovative practices or act as an intermediary between service providers and stakeholders (e.g. LT, LV, MT, SE, SI, SK). The national associations can also strengthen collaboration between the service providers and training units of career practitioners when acting as common reference points between different sectors.

6.2 Challenges

6.2.1 The countries report on improved co-operation in both policy development and service delivery, but one of the remaining challenges in relation to LMI in career services relates to still fragmented service delivery within different sectors. Often the initiatives and drivers for innovative practices are taken by governmental organisations in the form of policy development, regulations, funding or other initiatives within the sector, while often the innovative practices are from bottom up. The countries might not yet have a jointly agreed cross-sectoral national vision of guidance services.

6.2.2 In cases where the work of career practitioners are strongly connected to the management of public support to unemployed persons, the challenge in transforming the services relates to the competences of the practitioners. They need new

competences in facing the changes in the mutation of labour market as well as in the use of LMSI in daily practice.

6.3 Options for future development

6.3.1 The countries stress the importance of support for common development and collection of structured information on both national and EU level. This can be achieved through projects and existing networks. The new CareersNet provides a forum for knowledge sharing, transfer of expertise and peer learning across the participating countries using a common structure across the Member States. However, in addition to the CareersNet expert group, the responses support the establishment of a co-operation platform or a working group as an policy-advisory body on EU level. Through co-operation and sharing experiences, this structure could inform both EU and national lifelong guidance policies and stimulating progress in concrete elements of national guidance systems. In order to achieve evident impact, countries could co-operate in pairs or cross-boarder clusters and supporting each other in achieving very concrete developments (indicators).

6.3.2 The use of online communities or workspaces could be used for sharing good practices, for mutual learning and for research. This could be supported with MOOCs around the topic.

6.3.3 Use of service design tools (design thinking) in development of career services could be beneficial at both national and EU level. Within this process, the ideas are developed together with the end users – both through personal exchange as well as via online platforms. Also sufficient discussion on the career services design principles is needed within the guidance community (client groups, practitioners, researchers and students, policy makers) both on the national and EU level.

6.3.4 In some countries universities and academic research centers work closely with the service providers in developing the tools to collect and disseminate LMI and approaches for co-operation between stakeholders. This kind of partnership could be strengthened and would generate innovations which could be implemented both in initial and continuous training of the career practitioners.

6.4 Questions for table discussions:

Which actions can be adopted to help bring upon innovation in policy and practice level, bearing in mind institutional resistance, inherited cultures and context diversity (education, PES, communities, enterprises)? How can stakeholder co-operation and cross national exchange better be shaped to contribute to this process?

7 Access for the client groups with specific needs

Pre-conference question: For example, how could co-operation support: preventive and recovery measures for NEET; activation of long term unemployed; upskilling, qualification and redeployment of the employed (especially with low qualifications)?

7.1 Co-operation support

7.1.1 In meeting the needs for guidance by means of cross-sectoral co-operation the Youth Guarantee initiatives appear to be the most common measure (e.g AT, BE, FI, FR, IT, LV, MT). The forms of co-operation are mostly similar to those identified in the ELGPN Concept Note 4 on Youth Guarantee and Lifelong Guidance¹⁶, e.g. individualised programmes, second chance trainings (FR, ID, SI), outreached activities, training accounts or accompanied employment. Some of the YG activities are developed in public-private partnerships (FI, MT, SK) and include additional continuous training for practitioners (EE, EL)

7.1.2 The countries responded, that integration of career education and guidance in curricula within primary and secondary education can act as a preventive measure for early school leaving and it can facilitate individual growth and skills (CMS) which are needed in transition to further education or labour market (e.g. BE, BiH, HR and SE). It would be important that the further enhancement of these skills are included also within the guidance services provided by PES. Communication campaign or integration points to inform refugees and newcomers can also act as preventive measures (BE, DE).

¹⁶ Bors-Borbely, T. & Hutchinson, J. (2014). The Youth Guarantee and Lifelong Guidance. ELGPN Concept Note No. 4. <http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/elgpn-concept-note-youth-guarantee>

7.1.3 According to the responses, tracking/early warning systems are necessary for identifying potential early school leavers or NEETs (BE, HR, MT, SE) and they are most effective when developed and implemented in co-operation with education, youth, social and employment sectors. These systems can also include specific online spaces dedicated for young people with disabilities and can include references additional educational and healthcare facilities (e.g. FR)

7.1.4 The knowledge and expertise from different sectors can be shared within a holistic approach in One-stop-Guidance Centers (e.e. HR,FI,FR, DE, MT, RS, SI). These kind of operating models require strong partnerships between the actors in defining the area, goals and forms of co-operation and contractual arrangements for co-funding the services.

7.1.5 The training and work-based learning for people can include government subsidy or training vouchers in which the government pays the salaries and the companies bear the responsibility of training (IS, IT, MT). The Swedish PES introduces a strategic choice to engage more collaboration with actors in an activity called “job matching through education” in motivating individuals to take steps towards education and labour market. PES in Malta assists long-term unemployment to re-enter the labour market in a programme of three phases: profiling, training and job placements.

7.2 Challenges

7.2.1 Key challenges include developing sustainable co-operation for widening access to client groups with special needs as these are connected to funding mechanisms. Often targeted services are developed and implemented within EU funded projects and not necessarily connected with other mainstream guidance services.

7.2.2 The country responses indicate that co-operation between sectors has improved, but the responsibility and mandate for career services for different target groups are still in different government sectors.

7.3 Options for further development

7.3.1 The countries suggest that it is important task for the EU is to build on previous experience and establish a sustainable arena/platform for European countries where

peer learning and innovative practices for service development for groups with specific needs could be exchanged. This would include policy sharing, promotion and support for development of the broader EU policy framework for lifelong guidance.

7.3.2 At national level it is important to recognise that guidance is a shared policy responsibility across education, training, youth, adult learning, validation, employment and social affairs policy fields, and that individuals' careers pass through jurisdictions of different sectors¹⁷. The development of cross-sectoral and multi-professional co-operation is needed to ensure access and effective service provision

7.4 Questions for table discussions:

Which actions can be developed increase access for weakened social groups, in particular the low qualified, the NEET and the unemployed? How can national authorities better use guidance to address the challenges taken up in current EU policy initiatives?

8 Better mobility and labour market functioning

Pre-conference question: How could co-operation support: the role of practitioners in creating intermediation in the labour market (gathering employers' needs, signalling job searchers characteristics, oiling the training system, supporting international mobility for learning); improving hiring practices; informing and being informed by social partners?

8.1 Recent development

8.1.1. In a number of countries, the Public Employment Services foster the transparency of supply and demand on the national labour market by gathering information on the applicant profiles and open vacancies (e.g. BiH, BG, DE, IT, SI, SE, UK). This data collection includes skills needs of employers and qualification levels of the clients. The data is disseminated through national online services.

¹⁷ See also: Career Development at the Crossroads. Communique 2017. 8th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policies. 18-21 June 2017, Seoul, Korea.
http://iccdpp2017.org/download/Communique_2017_ICCDPP.pdf

8.1.2 Countries (e.g. BE, BG, HR, CZ, FI, DE, MT, SE) indicate the importance of the Euroguidance Network as an EU-wide mechanism which supports mobility for learning and fosters the European dimension in guidance and counselling. This includes promotion of awareness of EU mobility tools for learners and workers and of Open Education Resources for professional development. Examples of the EU mobility tools include ECVET, ECTS, EQF, ESCO, EUROPAS, EURES, EUROPEAN SKILLS PASSPORT, EUROPEAN LANGUAGE PASSPORT and PLOTEUS. The Euroguidance centers can also provide information and training about these tools for practitioners within initial and in-service training programmes together with national partners.

8.1.3 If career education is integrated in curriculum (e.g. BE, HR, EE), more attention can be given to the development of CMS (incl digital skills) in schools to improve access and understanding of LMI. When doing so, links between labour market information and learning opportunities needs to be improved and made easy to use and understand taking into account the needs of different target groups.

8.1.4 Guidance practitioners can promote the quality, objectivity and reliability of labour market information by collecting and disseminating it through partnerships between key stakeholders. Guidance practitioners can enrich forecasting and relate information on education and training provision to local, regional and national labour market opportunities in co-operation with employer organisations, HRD, sectoral councils (BiH, FI, EL, IS, LT, RS, SK)

8.1.5 EU funded programmes, such as Erasmus+ have enabled co-operation to share experiences and good practices in mobility (HR, CY, CZ, DE).

8.1.6 Countries have developed numerous online platforms, digital tools and devices to assist mobility and in identifying and formalizing transferable and transversal skills. Tools have been developed to identify transferable skills and promote the discovery of trades with similar skills (e.g. FR). Identifying transferable skills helps to identify bridges between trades and/or sectors. In this context, the aim of the approach is to inform people and businesses in the proximity between different trades with respect to the skills they mobilize. This information enables individuals to consider a move towards a

new business line or sector, by detecting skills they possess and those they need to acquire (through training by example) in order to be able to exercise this new profession.

8.2 Challenges

8.2.1 During last decades, there has been a number of sectoral networks dealing with various career guidance issues (including LMI) or sectors on national and EU levels. However, there is still lack of building up effective political links between these sectoral co-operation initiatives. There is still lack of common understanding (from guidance practitioners representing different parts of career guidance system) that guidance services have to be provided in a systematic way (without intermissions) and in a lifelong perspective. Thus, currently operating parallel sectoral networks give the impression of competition between each other.

8.2.2 The countries indicate that the low number of qualified practitioners employed within the guidance services can create an obstacle for effective use of LMI. International co-operation in this field will foster the improvement of the services.

8.2.3 Alongside the development of online LMI tools, enough attention is not being paid to reliability of information (i. e. an objective and assessable description of skills, based on observations of work stations, surveys, interviews by experts), on the regular updating of information, or on the legibility of information. This implies that LMI is among one of the weakest features of national lifelong guidance systems. Another challenge related to online tools is the common language that is usable by both employers and job-seekers.

8.3 Options for further development

8.3.1 The countries emphasise the importance of the Erasmus+ programme and its supporting initiatives in order to support international mobility in education as means of ensuring high quality and modern education system, which will encourage students to explore and identify their interests and skills and ultimately prepare them for the transition into the labour market. In this respect, they highlight the work of the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes

8.3.2 Countries suggest increased engagement of employers' organisations and HR specialists in particular in the process of shaping continuous professional development programmes for career counsellors with focus on introducing the above topics.

8.3.3 The use of LMI can be progressed by increasing individuals' access to experiential and non-experiential forms of labour market information¹⁸. More attention should be put on links between work-based learning and career guidance in validation and adult learning.

8.3.4 Attention should also be paid to developing forecast knowledge and skills of career practitioners in initial and continuing professional development.

8.3.5 Guidance practitioners operating in relevant sectors (education, labour, companies' levels) should have structured and clear communication system (platform), as well as periodicity of sharing information and transmitting the relevant career information between each other in order to better present the labour market situation and contribute to possible future developments related to currently proposed education and labour market opportunities. Therefore, future co-operation mechanisms could be based on building coherent and sustainable career guidance systems (without barriers of the services in education and labour market or world of work) with supporting and learning environment and clear framework of roles, tasks, communication and peer learning subsystems. This proposal is in line with the Recommendation 19 from the 8th International Symposium (Korea, 2017) which encouraged the involvement of employers in building career development systems. "Employers can provide information on current and projected demand and help to shape the supply of skills and labour. Career development can also be used to reflect the experience of individuals back to employers and to shape employment practices and the demand side of the labour market".

¹⁸ See also: Career Development at the Crossroads. Communique 2017. 8th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policies. 18-21 June 2017, Seoul, Korea.

http://iccdpp2017.org/download/Communique_2017_ICCDPP.pdf

¹⁹ See also: Career Development at the Crossroads. Communique 2017. 8th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policies. 18-21 June 2017, Seoul, Korea.

http://iccdpp2017.org/download/Communique_2017_ICCDPP.pdf

8.4 Questions for table discussions

Which actions can be developed improve career mobility within countries and across frontiers? How can guidance change to better contribute to minimise social stratification of the labour market and help people have better opportunities?

9 Competence of practitioners

Pre-conference question: How could co-operation support: Awareness of European initiatives in LLG, greater knowledge and competence of practitioners in using ICT effectively, integrating LMI successfully in guidance activities and supporting with validation processes and co-operating with other organisations/professionals? How can co-operation help introduce these elements in initial and continuing training?

9.1 Recent development

9.1.1 European Union Member States have acknowledged the professionalisation of career guidance services in different sectors as a priority within the guidance practice and policy development and already in 2005 agreed that the professionalism and qualifications of service providers constitute one of the five quality meta-criteria for national guidance systems²⁰. In their responses the countries highlight that following the development of the ELPGN Quality Assurance framework, and connected with the regulated professions in other fields like health, or European safety, the initial and continuing training of guidance practitioners was an area for improvement through effective co-operation in this area.

9.1.2 In a number of countries, the Euroguidance centers have actively contributed on initial and continuing training of career practitioners on relevant topics such as mobility, good practices in guidance and the use of LMI. Countries suggest that Euroguidance training initiatives on both national and EU-level could provide inputs within their mandate by promoting mobility among career practitioners, organising study visits, professional development workshops, webinars and thematic conferences (e.g. BE, CZ, EL, LV, LT, MT, NO, RS,SE)

²⁰ See CEDEFOP: Improving Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems: using common European reference tools. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2005

9.1.3 New technologies offer new ways of learning and collaborative reflection among practitioners. The development and implementation of the international summer school on ICT in guidance and counselling (FI) provides an example of structured co-operation on how the training module was built on research findings developed in co-operation with the participating Nordic counsellor training units. A similar joint effort in development by the EmployID project offers new learning solutions to PES practitioners. Labour market information, MOOC and Peer Coaching course as well as the community of practice platform are all part of the project. The CEDEFOP initiative on the use of LMI and ICT in guidance has also engaged the participating countries to develop tools for practitioners.

9.1.4 Country responses include examples of partnerships including academic institutions (AT, FR) which have been established between training providers and companies. These partnerships include local agreements with professional and inter-professional organizations with corporate advisors to bring the education system closer to its economic environment (FR, AT). This provides opportunities to engage enterprises in the design and implementation of the training programmes

9.2 Challenges

9.2.1 The country responses indicate a clear variance in the range of the depth of career practitioners' guidance practices and training in EU Member States. In the process of developing the New Skills Agenda for Europe, the European Commission (2016) sought to gather statistical data on the credentialing of guidance practitioners at the member state level. However, the feedback was incomplete; Member States were unable to provide feedback in a consistent way due to variation in structures and practices. The diversification of the job profiles in different countries depends largely on the operational model of guidance system, PES structure, priority tasks, and activation strategies used in the country²¹. Often countries provide separate training for different sectors practitioners for different sectors. To overcome this divergence, countries suggested a mechanism that would bring together guidance practitioners from all sectors. This would make it possible for them to offer complementary services

²¹ See also: Sienkiewicz, L. (2012). *Job profiles and training for employment counsellors*. European Commission. Brussels

to beneficiaries throughout their lives, with a seamless transition from one stage to the other

9.2.2 One of the challenges faced by guidance practitioners is the diversity of their clientele. Multicultural and international aspects and clients' highly individualized demands are a growing part of guidance practitioners' daily work. These themes have been addressed explicitly in the initial training and continuous professional development of guidance practitioners.

9.2.3 The Council resolution on lifelong guidance (European Commission, 2004) invited Member States to improve the initial and continuing training of career practitioners as well as "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 and to build on and adapt existing structures and activities (networks, work groups, programs) related to the implementation of the resolution priorities". However, according to the country responses it seems that the links between initial and continuous training of career practitioners still need improvements. Countries suggest that continuing training programmes should be reviewed in order to give a fresh view on what is going on in the labour market, present changes in the concepts and understanding of career counselling and management, as well as new EU funded initiatives for guidance counsellors and their clients.

9.3 Options for further development

9.3.1 One option to promote professionalism would be the enhancement of research based and jointly developed online training courses for career practitioners in a modularised and multilanguage format. A good starting point is to explore the existing and visible opportunities/platforms. This kind of initiative could include the exchange of trainers in the EU level as well. Moreover, a continuing training system could encompass all elements of the initial training programme and provide relevant updates and information necessary for the daily work of guidance practitioners.

9.3.2 Countries suggest that professionalism and co-operation in the practitioner training could be enhanced with European level competence frameworks for career practitioners. European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social

Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) launched in 2014 a European reference competence profile for PES and European Employment Services (EURES) counselors²². This profile follows the Cedefop competence framework from 2009²³. During last two decades, the EU has funded a number of development projects that have defined practitioner competence frameworks. These can be applied in national contexts in accordance with national policies or accreditation mechanisms. As countries have autonomy in the design of the services and according to experiences of European structured co-operation in the field of guidance practice and policy development, the competencies and qualifications of career practitioners need to be reflected in the light of the individual, organizational, and societal expectations associated with the national features of the guidance model

9.3.3 Currently, efforts to create common training for practitioners exist within academic providers or EU funded projects. However, these vary in terms of quality and content, which can prevent sustainable impact on the training programmes. More structured co-operation among formal education (universities) and the career guidance stakeholders (PES, Schools, professional bodies, Validation, Upskilling adults, Youth Guarantee initiatives, EU funded projects), co-ordinated by Ministries (Education and Labour) is needed and urgent.²⁴

9.3.4 At the 8th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policies, the countries suggested stronger involvement of employers and other stakeholders in the design and delivery of career practitioner training programmes. There was a significant lack of LMI in the initial training of practitioners. Career practitioners should be advocates of guidance among stakeholders, explain the value of it, and build effective partnerships²⁵.

²² European Commission. (2014a). *European reference competence profile for PES and EURES counsellors*, Brussels

²³ Cedefop. (2009) *Professionalising career guidance. Practitioner competences and qualification routes in Europe*. Cedefop panorama series; 164. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

²⁴ See also: Career Development at the Crossroads. Communiqué 2017. 8th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policies. 18-21 June 2017, Seoul, Korea.
http://iccdpp2017.org/download/Communique_2017_ICCDPP.pdf

²⁵ See also: Career Development at the Crossroads. Communiqué 2017. 8th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policies. 18-21 June 2017, Seoul, Korea.
http://iccdpp2017.org/download/Communique_2017_ICCDPP.pdf

9.3.5 More emphasis should be put on further development of the existing online tools in the EU level and the trainings on the use of ICT and handling complex LMI. An impulse from the European Commission and/or the European Council of Education and Employment Ministers in this direction could be helpful

9.4 Questions for table discussions

Which actions can be adopted in initial and continuous training of practitioners to help them acquire competences, knowledge and develop attitudes favourable to ICT and LMI integration, as well as cultural adaptability? Which complementary support structures or actions could help complement training?

10 Integrated, lifelong support

Pre-conference question: How could co-operation support: Better co-ordination of guidance services across PES and educational institutions for young people; more integration between social support, NGO activity and PES support to unemployed, at-risk and migrants; more co-operation between workplace career development and guidance providers; more co-operation between careers education and guidance provision in and outside the school system

10.1 Recent development

10.1.1 Most European countries face the challenge of fragmentation and sector interest in the lifelong guidance practice and policy development. The Council Resolutions (2004, 2008) encouraged countries to enhance co-ordination and co-operation among various national, regional and local stakeholders. As one of the outcomes of structured European co-operation within joint action programmes and the ELGPN, the countries reported increased communication and co-operation processes between different ministries and other policy-making organisations (e.g. social partners and non-governmental organisations)²⁶. In most of the countries, the establishment of a national lifelong guidance forum or other representative structure is a concrete example of the increased co-operation. Countries refer to the work of a national lifelong

²⁶ See also: ELGPN 2015: European Lifelong Guidance Policies: Summative Report 2007-15. A report on the work of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network 2007-15. <http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/elgpn-summative-report-2007-2015>

guidance forum or a national working group and as referenced in the EU Guidelines for Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems.

10.1.2 The conclusions from the 6th European conference on lifelong guidance policy 13-14 June 2016 in Haarlem, the Netherlands, noted that regional and national cross-sectoral arrangements rely heavily on a range of collaborative and partnership activities at both a national (top-down) and regional (bottom-up) approach. Bringing together the skills and assets of all partners to deliver a public service or goods (both online or offline) as a public service is a welcome development. Some countries report progress on the links between national and regional co-ordination mechanisms (DE, FI, FR, HR, IT, SE).

10.1.3 The European Network of Public Employment Services (PES) Network organised a Mutual Learning Seminar 'Career Guidance and Lifelong Learning' in 28-29 June 2017 in Helsinki, Finland. One of the aims of the seminar was to share and present practices and facilitate discussions to support peer learning with the aim of enhancing collaboration between PES, career guidance services, Youth Guarantee providers, employers, education and training institutions, municipalities and NGOs. PES stressed that delivery of services in partnership with other providers was crucial to the successful implementation of career guidance and lifelong learning, but that national and local conditions remain a deciding factor. Experts suggested that a desired goal for PES should be to offer services for career guidance and lifelong in a cross-sectoral way and through multi-channelling. Here, the focus needs to be shifted from supply-centred to customer-centred, where citizens and employers are the customers. The Seminar recommendations suggest that PES needs to develop new kinds of spaces for career guidance, where PES can become conductors, enablers, partnership enablers and assume a 'bridge building' role²⁷.

10.2 Challenges

10.2.1 The countries report improved co-operation between sectors within the national or regional working groups or forums, but on the other hand, the countries indicate

²⁷ See: PES Network Seminar Summary Report 'Career Guidance and Lifelong Learning'.
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1163&eventId=1232&furtherEvents=yes>

clearly the need for more systematic co-operation between the different sectors. More efforts need to be done for co-operation if the countries are decreasing funding for public career services. Having redundant services from different sectors, A coherent services provision is less viable if service funding is reduced.

10.2.2 In many Member States, the function and role of ICT in career guidance, and the focus on guidance strategies and policies are interrelated and interconnected. There is diversity among the countries in the current understanding of ICT's role in relation to both Labour Market Skills Intelligence (LMSI), and national lifelong guidance policies. The full potential of ICT is not utilised either in the formation of lifelong guidance policies, nor in the integrated service delivery

10.3 Options for further development

10.3.1 According to the country responses, the ability to reference policy development throughout the EU and to access external expertise, as a basis for shaping national policy, can be greatly facilitated by transnational co-operation mechanisms. Countries suggest that the cross-sectoral co-operation should start at the EU level among the DG Employment and DG Education and Culture. The common policy on career guidance should support development of national career guidance systems, by means of a Commission led Working Group and promotion of structured co-operation mechanisms between the member countries.

10.3.2 Systematic policy co-operation between national and EU level stakeholders needs to be improved and supported including a clear division of responsibility and leadership on institutional/sectoral level that supports long-term planning and implementation. The countries expressed their interest to continue the process of annual/biennial European lifelong guidance conferences for policy makers and career practitioners from different sectors. Participation in these events might be utilized as an incentive for national guidance communities to enter into cross sectoral co-operation and present good experiences and practices during the forums; link European forums with activities of National forums, providing coherence and interconnection of topics addressed.

10.3.3 The technology supports efforts to engage citizens in utilising complementary online working spaces and multichannelled guidance service delivery modes. More attention should be paid on the strategic use of ICT in career services aims to improve the quality and efficiency of career guidance services through more efficient use of ICT resources and skills. This systematically focused and integrative use of ICT could compile the key features of the career services in a common conceptual framework. The career services would be conducted using multisynchronous ways of communication where direct communication and asynchronous means are combined to meet the varying needs of individuals.

10.3.4 The countries proposed an online European workspace in which it would be possible to share policies, tools, experiences and practices that will foster the European vision of guidance and strengthen guidance community in a consistent structure across the countries.

10.4 Questions for table discussions

Which actions can be developed to generate better integration between services and currently existing provisions? Please reflect on relationships between: PES and education/training; public sector and enterprises; public and civil/3rd sector

11 Evidence and accountability of guidance practice

Pre-conference question: How could co-operation support: the establishment of an agreed set of monitored variables, which could generate regular reporting and policy visibility of guidance services; establish regular evaluation for the improvement of service provision; support the building of a repository of research oriented information?

11.1 Recent development

11.1.1 All countries emphasise that monitoring is crucial for the increased effectiveness of career guidance, for the professionalisation of the practitioners, and for transparent services. Evidence on 'what works' is high on the political and practitioner agenda. Only few countries report on systematic measures for evidence and accountability, especially within PES sector (DE, IT, MT, SE). Some countries

report initiatives, which are focusing on the development of national systems of quality frameworks/standards for the guidance systems (FI, NO, RS)

11.1.2 The tools developed by the ELGPN have acted as catalyst for national initiatives and stimulated stakeholder discussions in developing more solid evidence base for practice and policy development (AT, CZ, EE, FI, LV, TR). However, countries report that this is a work in progress.

11.2 Challenges

11.2.1 Evidence and accountability of guidance practice seem still to be the weakest part of the career guidance systems on both national and EU levels. The challenges in developing a consistent evidence base relate to the varying structures in the service provision. Often the mechanisms for evidence and accountability have been established to inform the internal needs of the institution that delivers the services. This is the case especially in higher education, where institutes have more autonomy in their services.

11.2.2 The emerging trend of outsourcing the career services imply that there will be a risk of competitive interests with differing requirements and differing levels of accountability among the contracted service providers. These new type public/private partnerships require common principles for evidence and accountability to guarantee their professionalism and impartiality.

11.3 Options for further development

11.3.1 It seems that no country has been able to create a consistent structure for evidence and accountability. The countries express an urgent need to further enhance the work of already developed frameworks for quality and evidence through structured European level co-operation. European co-operation could be extremely helpful in supporting the establishment of a national monitoring and reporting system on guidance provision, use, and practice as well as on guidance outcomes and impact. Co-operation could contribute to more qualitative and straightforward process of building a repository of research-oriented information on national, as well as EU levels.

11.3.2. As a first step in developing a monitoring system, evidence collection and analysis relevant of big data could be produced in co-operation with academics, public-policy researchers and consultants, policy makers and practitioners within a Europe funded initiative or a project. The new CareersNet database established by Cedefop provides an opportunity for maintain structured data collection on guidance systems across the Member countries and for the development of jointly agreed indicators on guidance systems. The database can act as a source for thematic analyses to feed the guidance systems and policy development both on EU and national levels. This database could feed also the revision of the international guidance policy reviews conducted in the EU Member States in early 2000's. In the long run the European Commission could establish a European monitoring system by encouraging Member States to collect a commonly agreed set of data on guidance issues. A European Working Group could be established to develop the set of data needed for a "European Guidance Monitor."

11.3.3 One additional element in establishing the sustainable evidence-base is the engagement of the practitioners to start to document their guidance services and thus generate evidence for the practice and policy development.

11.4 Questions for table discussions

Which actions can be adopted to improve evidence about guidance outcomes and socioeconomic impacts? Which evidence should be prioritised and which could feasibly be incorporated in regular monitoring of services? (please consider variations in context of provision)

12 The use of ICT in guidance

12.1 In addition to the description of the current use of ICT in lifelong guidance, the analysis of country responses focused on identifying and describing the perceived developments in the use of ICT in lifelong guidance since the previous data collection for the Italian EU Presidency conference in 2014.²⁸ The aim of this analysis is to

²⁸ Kettunen, J., Vuorinen, R., & Ruusuvirta, O. (2016). European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network representatives' conceptions of the role of information and communication technologies related to

discover and describe the qualitative differences in perceived development phases. This analysis is based on qualitative analysis that is particularly suitable to investigate different ways in which people at collective level perceive the same concept or a phenomenon.

12.2 The preliminary analysis of the country responses revealed four distinct descriptive categories reflecting the perceived developments in the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in lifelong guidance ranging from 1) *the initial use of ICT in guidance*, 2) *new information and data access* to 3) *new ways of services delivery* and 4) *sustaining new ways of service delivery*.

12.3 Shifts in the rationale for using ICT appeared as transitions from increasing access to guidance and information to improving the quality and efficiency of career services. Where perceived developments in the use of ICT in lifelong guidance were perceived as initial use of ICT or to new information and data access in guidance the key rationale for ICT use was the potential of widening access and improving the consistency of the career information. Where development was perceived as new ways of service delivery and sustaining new ways of service delivery an expressed rationale moved to providing more effective client services and to improving the efficiency of career services.

12.4 In terms of conceptual framework for guidance provision, the transition was from lack of the conceptual framework to cross-sectorally agreed conceptual framework. The identified need for improvement in the system level varied from models and levels of funding, fragmentation of the services and diverse technologies to coordination of sustainable development of the services. Where perceived development is the initial use of ICT and information and data access, the emphasis was on availability of relevant, updated content modified to fit the latest ICT technology. Perceived developments as new ways of service delivery emphasise that the successful integration of existing and emerging technologies in career services is not only dependent on the skills or technical facilities available but also on practitioners'

national guidance policies. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 16, 327-342. doi:[10.1007/s10775-015-9313-7](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10775-015-9313-7)

willingness to accept the changes that new technology may bring to service delivery. There is a need to development methods of practise and practitioner training that improves digital skills of citizens as well as career practitioners.

12.5 Where development was perceived as new ways of service delivery, increasing emphasis is on more formal support mechanisms in creating a common conceptual framework for modeling the services and effective practices. In countries, where perceived developments in the use of information and communication technologies relate to sustaining new ways of service delivery, the identified improvement need in system level is on coordination or sustainable development. This includes the development of plans and statements of co-operation and commitments spelling out joint responsibilities, objectives, agreed contributions or resources and other aspects of the linked but separate roles of different actors involved.

13 Conclusions

13.1 In generating better integration between different sectors, the countries refer to the previous structured European co-operation in lifelong guidance practice and policy development and the tools developed by ELGPN. The countries suggest the wider use and applications of the ELGPN Guidelines for Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems across the sectors. In addition, the recommendations and conclusions of previous EU Presidency conferences on lifelong guidance policies, PES Network seminars and the International Symposia on Lifelong Guidance Policies provide valuable tools and directions for reflection. The Latvian response for this 7th EU Presidency conference on lifelong guidance policy provides aspirations for the future conferences:

“Effective co-operation (with the key role of career guidance providers in different levels and sectors) mechanisms could better support preventing youth and other target groups’ unemployment, as well as future work emigration flows and contribute to economic grow and social welfare of the countries.”