

The 10th ELGPN Plenary Meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark, 24-25 April 2012

The 10th ELGPN Plenary Meeting, held in Copenhagen, Denmark on 24-25 April 2012, was organised jointly by the Danish 2012 EU Presidency, the Danish Ministry of Children, and the European Commission. The meeting was attended by 88 delegates from 32 countries, including observers from Kosovo and Serbia. Many of the ELGPN parallel organisations (IAEVG, Fedora/ EAIE and the PES Network) and partner organisations (NCDA and ICCDPP) were also represented in the meeting.



Head of unit, Steffen Jensen welcomed the Plenary participants to Copenhagen

The meeting began with a ceremonial lighting of the ELGPN candle by the representatives of the previous Presidency, Ms Paulina Bogdanska (Polish Ministry of Labour and Social Policy) and Ms Anna Bakiewicz (Polish Ministry of National Education). The Plenary also heard music performed by talented students from the Royal Danish Academy of Music.

Mr Torben Kornbech Rasmussen, Director of the International Unit in the Danish Ministry of Children and Education, presented the highlights from the work of the Danish Presidency on education and training policy. He explained that the focus of the Danish Presidency has been on creating a better link between education and work, with a special emphasis on Vocational Education and Training. The Danish Presidency has also emphasised the importance of entrepreneurship by organising a meeting on the topic in June 2012. The meeting also received briefings from the representatives of the DG EAC and DG EMPL. The Plenary participants used the opportunity to ask several questions from the Commission representatives.

The main aim of the meeting was to discuss the 2011-12 ELGPN outputs. Plenary participants engaged actively in discussions on the ELGPN Re-

source Kit, Glossary and the 2011-12 Progress Report (see separate piece on the ELGPN outputs at the end of this newsletter). The meeting also discussed the ELGPN concept paper on youth unemployment, the draft 2013-14 Work Programme and the draft council resolution.



Exchanging views: Angel Tapia-Fernandez (FR) and Jorge Manco (SE)

The second key task for the meeting was the selection of a new ELGPN Co-ordinator for the 2013-14 term. The Plenary endorsed the Hungarian bid formally presented by Dr Tibor Bors Borbely-Pecze. The new Steering Group for the 2013-14 Work Programme was also confirmed. The next Steering Group will consist of representatives of Cyprus, Greece, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Italy and Latvia.



The ELGPN family photo at the Copenhagen Plenary meeting (All photos: Morten Bjerregaard)

At the end of the meeting, representatives of the forthcoming Cyprus EU Presidency, Ms Lena Nicolaou and Mr Antonis Kafouros, presented the Cyprus Presidency Programme on Lifelong Guidance. They also invited ELGPN members to the 11th ELGPN Plenary meeting to be held in Larnaca, Cyprus on 25-26 October 2012.

All the Plenary meeting documents, presentations and photos from the meeting can be found at the ELGPN website, <http://ktl.jyu.fi/ktl/elgpn/policymakers/cooperation/events/copenhagenplenary>.

Second meeting of network of observatories on skills needs and mismatches, 7-8 May 2012

This network was launched to support the implementation of the objectives of the EU Skills Panorama prior its launch by the end of 2012. The main goal is to develop the responsiveness of education and training systems to labour market demands and to improve transparency and mobility in the labour market.

The second meeting of the network provided the members a brief summary of the key elements of the development of the EUSP website. According to current plans, the website will have three modules which will provide data, information and analysis by country, by sector and by occupation. The meeting identified also potential sources of information which could be used to inform the EUSP. The potential user groups for the EUSP will include policy makers, social partners, guidance practitioners and citizens. The European Commission will organise a seminar related to the EUSP in the autumn 2012. More information about the EU Agenda for new skills and jobs can be found at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=958>

4th European Adult Education Conference by Tibor Bors Borbely -Pecze

ELGPN was invited to the 4th European Adult Education Conference in Florence, Italy 6-8, 2012

The conference was organised in conjunction with a meeting of the thematic working group (TWG) on quality in adult education. The TWG has three sub-groups on indicators, accreditation and staff competencies. A study has been carried out between the start of this program and the Florence Conference. The TWG also has two horizontal issues: i) validation/APEL of the staff and ii) guidance. ELGPN was invited to participate in the meeting as the participants of the conference were eager to learn more about LLP projects which focus on policy developments at the EU and member state levels and which can potentially influence policy developments. The current TWG on adult education also works on similar issues that the ELGPN addresses. Future cooperation of the two initiatives was seen as important and potentially fruitful.

Erasmus NICE Network conference, 5-7 June 2012

The Erasmus "Network for Innovation in Career Guidance & Counselling in Europe" (NICE) organised their final conference in Jyväskylä, Finland on 5-7 June.

The Erasmus NICE Network consists of 41 Higher Education Institutes from almost all European Countries with an aim to enhance professionalisation and innovations in the training of career guidance practitioners. The NICE project is co-ordinated by University of Heidelberg from Germany. During the conference the network discussed the "NICE Tuning Handbook" which is targeted to managers and teaching staff of degree programmes in guidance and counselling. The network proposes common reference points for role profiles of practitioners, core competencies as well as innovative contents of the training programmes. This work has links with the quality criteria of lifelong guidance systems proposed by ELGPN Work Package 4.



Dr. Jean Guichard (FR), Dr. Valérie Cohen-Scali (FR) and Dr. Jean-Pierre Dauwalder (CH) examine the NICE competencies in the NICE conference workshop (Photo: Dr. Sauli Puukari)

The participants had concrete opportunities to share good practices in teaching, learning and assessment of the learning outcomes from their own training programmes. During the last session of the meeting the Network identified future tasks in order to convert the project outcomes to possible training modules. A future challenge for the Network is to illustrate the applicability of the curriculum in different national settings. The Network members agreed future steps to maintain sustainable communication among the project partners. The NICE handbook will be launched in October 2012. More information about the NICE network at: <http://www.nice-network.eu/145.html>

Recent policy initiatives of the European Commission – Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Youth unemployment and the role of guidance in Europe 2020

Within the Europe 2020 strategy and related activities the role of lifelong guidance is acknowledged as one component of strategies to prevent and cure youth unemployment. The European Commission Communication "Youth on the Move" states that "*Quality career guidance services and vocational orientation need to be further developed, with strong involvement of labour market institutions.*" According to the Communication partnerships of relevant labour market actors including career guidance services shall help graduates from vocational pathways and from higher educational institutions to move as quickly as possible into a job. The communication also launched a new, more preventative youth guarantee: "*to ensure all young people are in a job, in education or in activation within four months after leaving school*" going beyond a guarantee for activation of (registered) young unemployed¹:

Given the fact that the European youth suffers most from the economic crisis and the structural labour market problems, as set out in the recent Youth Opportunities Initiative², the Commission reconfirms in its Communication "Towards a job rich recovery" (Employment Package - see article in this newsletter) its commitments to tackle the dramatic levels of youth unemployment, including by mobilizing available EU funding³. Echoing a call by the European Council⁴, the support for transition to work, e.g. through youth guarantees, activation measures targeting young people, the quality of traineeships⁵, and youth mobility should be prioritised.

In order to implement the actions presented in the "Employment Package" the Commission is currently working on the preparation of

1. a proposal for a Council Recommendation on Youth Guarantees,
2. a proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships.

The work on the Council Recommendation on Youth Guarantees takes into account results from a broad range of own and other activities and research. One example is the Peer Review within the European Commission's specific mutual learning programme for Public Employment Services, the PES

to PES Dialogue: "Youth Guarantees: PES approaches and measures for low-skilled young people"⁶.



Peer Review "Youth Guarantees", Vienna 2011

This Peer Review emphasised that employment and vocational guidance plays a crucial role in ensuring young peoples' successful transition from education to employment including:

- information and orientation of young persons about careers and available support services at school,
- cooperation with other guidance services and partnerships of all relevant actors including schools, VET institutions and PES,
- outreach activities in partnership with communities and NGOs to be able to deliver guidance to many of the young people most in need to it,
- specialist youth teams / counsellors in Public Employment Services and other service providers working with young unemployed because of their greater knowledge of the special situation of young people as well as of relevant networks,
- empowerment approaches which enable young persons to take control of their own destiny,
- involvement of young persons and use of social media to "speak the language of young persons.

1) European Commission Communication: Youth on the Move, 15.09.2010

2) Communication from the Commission Youth Opportunities Initiative, COM(2011) 933 of 20 December 2011.

3) The Accompanying Staff Working Document *Implementing the Youth Opportunities Initiative: first steps taken* presents an interim report of recent measures taken by the Member States to fight youth unemployment. In February 2012, Commission action teams visited the eight Member States with the highest youth unemployment rate. The results of these missions will be integrated in the National Reform Programmes.

4) Statement of the Members of the European Council of 30 January 2012.

5) Accompanying Staff Working Document Quality Framework for Traineeships.

6) Peer Review "Youth Guarantee: PES approaches ..." (2011) <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=105&newsId=1009&furtherNews=yes>

Commission Communication: Towards a job-rich recovery

Creating 17.6 million additional jobs in the European Union: this is what this formidable challenge means, in practice, to bring 75% of the EU's active population into employment by 2020 - the aim of the EU's strategy for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

To reach such an ambitious target, all levers must be activated. This is precisely the aim of the Communication entitled "Towards a jobs-rich recovery", which the European Commission put forward on 17 April 2012. It presents concrete ways of implementing a common EU approach to employment policy.

In the document, the Commission urges the Member States to adopt an agenda for job creation and labour market reforms, addressing both the demand and supply side of the labour market. The Commission also identifies a series of necessary measures for successful implementation of structural labour market reforms. This includes the need to deliver on opportunities for young people, as well as developing lifelong learning through career guidance which is key to security in employment and to productivity; the need for higher investment in skills to address the skills mismatches in Europe's labour markets, as well as better anticipation of skills needs.

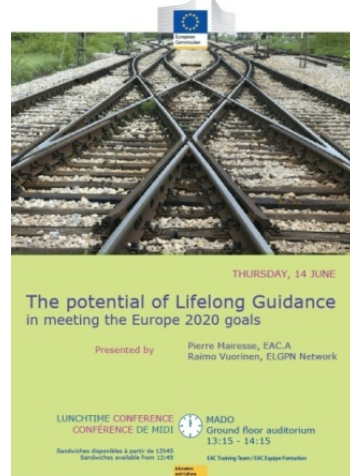
The "employment package" also aims to create a genuine EU labour market to improve labour mobility and to improve the matching of jobs with job-seekers with a proposal to transform the EURES job seeker portal into a true European placement and recruitment tool. Finally, the employment package paves the way for reinforced coordination and monitoring of employment policies at EU level in line with EU economic governance.

The Potentials of Lifelong Guidance in Meeting the Europe 2020 goals: Lunchtime conference at the European Commission, 14 June 2012

A lunchtime conference was organised in connection with the ELGPN Steering Group and Task Group Meeting at the DG EAC in Brussels, 14 June 2012.

The idea of organising a joint lunchtime seminar with interested Commission staff and ELGPN Steer-

ing Group and Task Group members was first raised at the joint ELGPN Steering Group and Task Group meeting in February 2012. The motive for organising such a conference was to raise the profile of the ELGPN among the DG EAC and DG EMPL staff members and to highlight contributions ELGPN is making to the European policy process in Lifelong Guidance policies.



The conference of over 50 participants was opened by Director Pierre Mairesse (DG EAC) who welcomed all the participants to the event. The address was given by the ELGPN Co-ordinator Raimo Vuorinen who first introduced the Network and then explained

how the lifelong guidance can contribute to meeting the Europe 2020 goals. A lively question and answer session and discussion followed with several contributions from both ELGPN members as well as Commission staff members.

In his presentation Mr Vuorinen explained that by establishing a forum for a dialogue on lifelong guidance as a cross-cutting theme across different policy sectors, the ELGPN has effectively acted as a forerunner of the Europe 2020 working methodology. Moreover, as a member-state-driven network, ELGPN represents an effective example of the Open Method of Co-ordination.

The European Commission will continue its subsidy to the Network from the Lifelong Learning Programme for 2013-14 Work Programme. As key principles for its future work, the Network should guarantee access to its activities to all member countries, and maintain their strong commitment to and ownership of these activities. There is a strong consensus to support the transversal nature of lifelong guidance, while strengthening its impact within the key related policy sectors.

In the next phase of the ELGPN's work, it will be important to identify all relevant tools, measures, parallel networks and initiatives involving DG EAC

and DG EMPL, so that these can be linked to lifelong guidance policy at EU and member-state levels.

The ELGPN Co-ordination unit would like to thank Koen Nomden and his team at the DG EAC for organising this great event. A thank you is also extended to all the participants for making the event a success.

National Career Development Association Global Career Development Conference, 21-23 June, Atlanta, GA

The National Career Development Association (NCDA) inspires and empowers the achievement of career and life goals by providing professional development, resources, standards, scientific research, and advocacy. NCDA is a founding division of the American Counseling Association (ACA).

The NCDA global conference was held in Atlanta, GA, the home town of Martin Luther King. The conference theme “Building on the Dream” referred to his goals towards freedom, justice, dignity and equality of all people. The programme included sessions on technology, career assessments, ethics and also evidence-based practice in career services.

The NCDA aims to strengthen the professional competences of career professionals and this work has a concrete interface of the ELGPN goals. More information about the global conference and NCDA activities are available at: <http://www.ncda.org>

Update on ELGPN Products

The four Work Packages, Network members and consultants have been working very hard to finalise the 2011-12 ELGPN outputs, namely the Lifelong Guidance Policy Development: a European Resource Kit, the ELGPN Glossary, the 2011-12 Progress Report and the Short Report. Final consultation round among Network members will be completed by mid-July. The four key products will be formally launched at the 11th ELGPN Plenary meeting in Larnaca, Cyprus, 25-26 October 2012.

Upcoming events

- IAEVG International Conference “Career Guidance for Social Justice, Prosperity and Sustainable Employment - Challenges for the 21st Century”, 3-6 October 2012, Mannheim, Germany
- 4th European Conference on Lifelong Guidance Policy, 24 October 2012, Larnaca, Cyprus
- 11th ELGPN Plenary Meeting, 25-26 October 2012, Larnaca, Cyprus
- French National Lifelong Guidance Conference, 26-27 November 2012

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Please note that the ELGPN Co-ordination unit will be closed for a summer break from 25 July to 5 August 2012 inclusive.

The Co-ordination team would like to wish ELGPN members and partners a sunny and relaxing summer break.

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