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# Career Management Skills

## FACTORS IN IMPLEMENTING POLICY SUCCESSFULLY



EUROPEAN LIFELONG  
GUIDANCE POLICY  
NETWORK

# **Career Management Skills: Factors in Implementing Policy Successfully**

Concept note commissioned by ELGPN

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# Career Management Skills: Factors in Implementing Policy Successfully

## Introduction

This concept note outlines a number of issues related to the process of Career Management Skills (CMS) policy implementation in six sectoral areas – schools, vocational education and training (VET), higher education, adult education, employment and social inclusion. Specifically, it aims to identify those elements that support policy development and implementation, as well as those that can prove to be an obstacle to policy implementation in relation to CMS. The issues highlighted are supported by theory and experiences observed in ELGPN member countries, collected through the dissemination of a questionnaire on ‘Success and disabling factors in CMS policy implementation’ with responses from eleven countries (AT, CZ, DE, DK, HU, LT, MT, PT, SE, SI, SK). The responses varied in terms of quality and level of detail. It needs to be noted that other countries might also have interesting practices of CMS policy implementation which are not incorporated in this concept note. A shorter version of the note is included in the ELGPN Progress Report 2011–12.

Introducing a new policy, such as CMS, brings with it challenges in implementation. This is because, as Ball<sup>1</sup> notes, change often entails processes that are both complex and messy. Most policies according to the latter are ‘ramshackle, compromise, hit-and-miss affairs that are reworked, tinkered with, nuanced and inflected through complex processes of influence, text production, dissemination and, ultimately, re-creation in contexts of practice’ (p.126). The responses to the questionnaire were analysed using a framework developed by Honig<sup>2</sup> and elaborated by Sultana<sup>3</sup>, which draws attention to four key aspects that impact on the policy implementation process:

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<sup>1</sup> Ball, S. (1998). Big policies/small world: An introduction to international perspectives in education policy. *Comparative Education*, 34(2), 119–130.

<sup>2</sup> Honig, M.I. (Ed.) (2006). *New directions in education policy implementation: Confronting complexity*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

<sup>3</sup> Sultana, R.G. (2008). *The challenge of policy implementation: A comparative analysis of vocational school reforms in Albania, Kosovo and Turkey: Peer Learning 2007*, p. 15. European Training Foundation. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

- (1) The policy to be implemented.
- (2) The people involved in the implementation.
- (3) The place of implementation.
- (4) The pace of implementation.

## 1 The policy to be implemented

The type of policy to be implemented has a major impact on the shaping of the policy implementation process. This relates to the goals the policy aspires to achieve, the connection it has with other policies and the way implementation takes place:

- **The policy goals** need to be clear and coherent so as to be understood by all stakeholders involved.
- **Justifying the significance and meaning of the new policy and its goals** is the first step in the implementation process. In our case, if they are to support its inclusion, policy-makers need to be convinced that the acquisition of CMS is of utmost significance. Taking the time to explain and justify the policy goals, i.e. what CMS involves, and the value of teaching youngsters and/or adults the CMS needed to face today's tougher labour market, may help in convincing policy-makers of the value of supporting such a policy. This is challenging in itself, since a policy change is more generally accepted if tangible and quick results are apparent, but this is not likely to be the case in CMS acquisition. Evidence for the effectiveness of CMS development is difficult to prove: this might be one of the obstacles for successful policy implementation. From the questionnaire responses, it transpired that the policy-makers are most commonly aware of the importance of CMS policy in the educational field (school and/or VET and/or higher education) (e.g. DE, HU, LT, MT, PT). In the employment sector, CMS policy is less common (though cf. DE, SI).

It is important that when the CMS policy is introduced, it **connects with the overall policy framework** of the six sectors (schools, VET, higher education, adult education, employment, social inclusion). In this way, people within organisations understand the value of such policies and are more likely to be willing to co-operate in the implementation process. From the questionnaire replies, this was evident in a few sectors in at least two countries (CZ, PT): for example, in the Czech Republic, the introduction of CMS in the education sector was in line with the overall education policy. In addition, when the CMS policy is seen to be responsive to the needs of the organisation's client groups, it is generally more easily accepted.

Another factor which helps in CMS policy implementation is having the various sectors leading towards **common policy goals**, so ensuring that CMS policies are in line with one another. Building a consensus can contribute to the successful implementation of the CMS policy, keeping in mind that the lack of a common vision across different sectors leads to fragmentation of services and waste of resources. In the Czech Republic, there is consultation between different stakeholders, namely representatives of two key ministries (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport; Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), professional associations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to ensure that the six sectors move towards common policy goals. This highlights the importance of cross-sectoral co-operation between all six sectors. CMS development throughout life is greatly facilitated by co-operation and co-ordination across guidance sectors.

Some aspects of CMS policy are easier to implement if they take place in a **top-down** manner whilst others are more likely to succeed if implemented **bottom-up**<sup>4</sup>:

<sup>4</sup> Sultana, R.G. (2008). *The challenge of policy implementation: A comparative analysis of vocational school reforms in Albania, Kosovo and Turkey: Peer Learning 2007*, p. 19. European Training Foundation. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

- Increasing capacity-building to sustain policy changes, for example, is more likely to be implemented by high-level decision-makers.
- On the other hand, certain changes can have more impact when they start at grassroots level. Such is the case with decisions on how CMS should be taught, e.g. as a separate subject or as a subsumed subject in the different learning/work contexts. This is because it is practitioners who are close to their client group and to the organisation's aims and ethos, and so are in the best position to have a positive impact.
- Nevertheless, in many situations, both approaches may help in the implementation process. This was pointed out by Germany (school, VET, employment), Malta (schools), Portugal (higher education) and Slovenia (employment sector).

**Incremental/fast-paced reform.** The balance between opting for a holistic, systemic approach or an incremental, issue-by-issue approach to reform is difficult to establish, with each decision having its trade-offs and implications for the implementation process:

- Both the Lithuanian and the Portuguese respondents refer to an incremental process. They highlight the fact that policy change requires agreement and major changes at various levels of the education system when referring to CMS policy inclusion.
- The more radical the policy change, the more difficult it is to implement. With regard to CMS, in some cases it may be more difficult to introduce as a new subject in the curriculum than to integrate across the curriculum. This situation is evident in Malta where, although the policy suggestion for CMS teaching is through a subsumed programme included in Personal and Social Development (a subject currently being taught in both primary and secondary schools), the tight curriculum, the fight for curriculum

space and the need for curriculum reform (currently in progress) are challenges being faced during implementation.

**Legislation.** Countries with high levels of commitment to developing and implementing a CMS policy have tended to show their commitment through promulgating relevant legislation. Germany is a good example. Countries without such legislation like Austria or the Czech Republic report a number of good practices, but in many cases these are not integrated in systemic ways and may not be sustainable in the long run.

## 2 The people involved in the implementation

**Multi-level implementation.** Policy implementation touches people performing different roles – top managers, middle managers and front-liners are some examples. It is more likely for CMS policy to be implemented if it is accepted by these different players. Indeed, critical to the implementation process is the way front-line implementers respond to policy demands. Resistance to change is detrimental for policy implementation and can hinder the whole process. Thus, as will be highlighted below, it is of paramount importance that front-liners are involved in the formulation process to ensure that they are on board with policy changes. Providing feedback during the implementation phase is also important because ultimately it is what frontliners do that turns out to be what policy becomes.<sup>5</sup>

**Consultation and communication.** Consulting with all stakeholders is paramount during CMS policy formulation. Ensuring that all stakeholders' views are heard helps the personnel concerned to

<sup>5</sup> Sultana, R.G. (2008). *The challenge of policy implementation: A comparative analysis of vocational school reforms in Albania, Kosovo and Turkey: Peer Learning 2007*, p. 35. European Training Foundation. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

feel that they are contributing to an overall national objective:

- It is important that no group of employees is excluded from consultation, and that consultation between policy-makers and professionals in the field is in place during CMS policy formulation. This was evident in Malta, where students, guidance teachers, school counsellors, public employment employees, university personnel, teachers' unions and key personnel from the Education Directorate were consulted during the career guidance policy formulation for the education sector. Interviews aimed to secure qualitative insights from these practitioners about career guidance provision being offered to students within Maltese schools at the time, and to examine their perceptions, opinions and attitudes regarding career guidance. Consequently, since the possibility of the policy being owned by all stakeholders concerned is stronger, its implementation at grass-roots level is arguably likely to be more successful.
- Efficient communication networks between policy-makers and policy implementers, and between different departments/ministries (e.g. employment/labour and education) are also important. An example of how such collaboration can take place is the National Guidance Forum in the Czech Republic. However, as will be noted in the Appendix in a detailed analysis of how the NGF developed in the Czech Republic, such fora are not without their difficulties.
- Communication continues to be crucial during the policy implementation phase. Some vertical and horizontal communication during policy implementation was perceived within the countries that replied to the questionnaire:
  - Czech Republic: schools.
  - Germany: schools, VET, employment sector and social inclusion sectors.

- Hungary: schools, VET, higher education, adult education, social inclusion sectors.
- Lithuania: schools, VET and higher education sectors.
- Malta: schools.
- Portugal: employment sector.
- Slovenia: VET and employment sectors.

**Key policy drivers.** Who pushes the reform can have an impact on whether and how implementation unfolds. For example, in a top-down policy environment, key driver/s from the Ministries are indispensable for CMS policy implementation in the six sectors – schools, VET, higher education, adult education, employment and social inclusion. Other key players include policy-makers, policy practitioners, experts, and researchers. It is only through identifying personnel who can determine CMS priorities and the direction and pace of change that policy implementation is possible. Needless to say, this is not enough. Following through the process of policy implementation is central to ensure that the CMS policy is operational. Thus, clear policy steering requires, in most cases, a dedicated co-ordinating unit that develops clear strategies to ensure progress in the field. A good example is the National Guidance Forum in Germany. A steering committee for the continuous development of the Forum provides the support for most of the stakeholders and actors in the guidance field, including the support of ministerial authorities.

**Policy implementation is to be supported by sound content development, professional service delivery, and well-trained staff.** The test of successful policy development is, ultimately, successful implementation. With regards to CMS, at least three aspects need to be carefully considered: CMS content, service delivery, and staff. Needless to say, the modalities in which CMS are delivered vary according to context and sector. CMS content in education settings, for instance, can be taught across the curriculum or as a separate subject; it can be provided by external guidance practitioners, school counsellors

and/or by teachers. Regardless of the mode of provision, however, it is important that guidance practitioners have sound knowledge of the subject, and have been properly trained. It is also important that the CMS programmes are developed on the basis of careful research. Those countries that reported successful CMS policy implementation confirmed that such success depended on having all three core elements in place: sound content, professional service delivery, and well-trained staff.

### 3 The place of implementation

The place of implementation refers to the context where the CMS policy is to be implemented: in other words, the organisational context in which the CMS curriculum is to be taught – schools, VET institutions, universities, Public Employment Services, adult learning centres, workplaces, etc.

**Organisational contexts.** Contexts are different and pose different challenges to the policy implementation process. To mention a few examples, one can highlight differences: in resource allocation; in funding; between public and private entities; in organisations' aims and objectives; amongst entities' perceptions of CMS teaching; and in organisations' locations – rural or urban, etc. These differences raise key issues regarding the implementation process in terms of not having a similar level playing field for CMS policy implementation. Despite a common policy direction, different contexts pose different challenges. This entails attention to strategies combining common factors in policy goals and flexible implementation in its realisation.

These contexts consist of a number of micro systems in which the concrete realisation takes place. The introduction of a CMS policy will in some cases impact on the various sub-systems of the organisation itself, particularly where the new policy challenges the existing functioning of the organisation, affects the individual members, unsettles established practices and norms for performance, or challenges

professional identity. Once again, these factors may hinder the policy implementation process relating to CMS. Success in this case again requires focus on agents performing intermediary roles – e.g. the headteacher in a school, the manager in a Public Employment Service, the course co-ordinator in a university, etc. This combines the place with the people dimension, confirming the inter-relationship of the different dimensions.

Organisational structures may also slow down the process of policy implementation. This is the case when leaders in strategic positions find it difficult to focus on one aspect, in our case CMS policy implementation, when they have a vast array of responsibilities.

**Sustainable funding of CMS activities.** Allocation of resources generally follows the promulgation of legal provisions regulating the implementation of a policy. The survey confirmed that there is generally a close connection between budget allocation and sectoral implementation of CMS. All countries that have some policy in place report having some funding. In many cases this is temporary funding (CZ, LT, SI), whilst in other cases funding is permanent but not sufficient (CZ, HU, SI). Germany is the only country where funding is reported as being both permanent and sufficient. Survey respondents referred to the importance of budgetary issues, with unstable funding being detrimental to the implementation of CMS activities.

**Political issues.** Politics can influence whether a policy is implemented or not:

- Political situations are context-specific and so actions for change, as in the introduction of CMS, can differ because of diverse country-specific conditions (social, political, economic). Additionally, in spite of common CMS goals, actions are prioritised at national/regional level according to differing contexts/conditions and available resources.
- Individual politicians may 'push' for declared policy goals implementation. In this way,

implementation in some countries depends on key policy drivers who push forward the CMS policy as mentioned above. On the other hand, political cycles may hinder the policy implementation process. Political decision-makers change, in which case efforts at convincing and promoting certain policies, in our case a CMS policy, have to be renewed with new leaders.

- There is also the strong support of international organisations such as the EU. For example, a key priority of EU education and training policy is to improve the quality and attractiveness of VET. With this support, there is more probability of seeing policy intentions realised. Unfortunately, the situation is not always so straightforward<sup>6</sup> and political rhetoric is at times not followed through with concrete support.

The place of implementation differs also in the six countries (out of ten) which responded to the questionnaire in terms of having some CMS policy in place (see Appendix for more details).

**Hungary** has a CMS policy conception in compulsory education:

- Under the first EU development plan (2004–08), CMS development as a core competency grades 1–12 was developed and partly tested but never introduced in all schools. The new national government in 2010 introduced a new law on public education and a new National Core Curriculum was issued in March 2012. These documents are based on knowledge, contrasted to skills and competencies. The new NCC highlights the role of vocational guidance as knowledge for early career choice (at grade 8, age 14).

- Under the VET system a new Law was issued in 2011. Paragraph 85 is dedicated to guidance but effective only for 3-year (grades 9–11) trade schools without school-leaving examinations and for secondary VET schools (grades 9–12).
- The new act on National Higher Education cut back the number of higher education students and does not explicitly mention career guidance.
- The old Employment Act (1991) listed different guidance services for adults, not only for registered job-seekers. Although the National LLG Council has expressed a strong viewpoint (2008)<sup>7</sup> on a cross-cutting national LLG system development, it has had very limited effect on the new regulations.

In addition:

- **Czech Republic** does not have an explicit CMS policy in place, according to the questionnaire replies. However, national framework educational programmes contain a substantial body of elements related to the development of skills needed for future career development. The National Guidance Forum is used as a communication platform amongst different stakeholders.
- **Germany** has a CMS policy in the following sectors: schools, VET, higher education, employment, and social inclusion. CMS policy is rarely in place in the adult education sector.
- **Lithuania** has a CMS policy in place in the education sector. The law on education has a reference to career education and development of CMS.
- In **Malta**, implementation of the CMS policy has progressed in the education sector.

<sup>6</sup> Sultana, R.G. (2008). *The challenge of policy implementation: A comparative analysis of vocational school reforms in Albania, Kosovo and Turkey: Peer Learning 2007*, p. 20. European Training Foundation. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

<sup>7</sup> NPT. (2008). Policy statement concerning the development of a national system of lifelong guidance/ counselling harmonised with EU requirements.

- **Portugal** has CMS policies in place in higher education and in the employment sector. However, these policies take a non-systematic rather than structured and planned form.
- **Slovenia** has a CMS policy in place in the employment sector.

#### 4 The pace dimension

**Pace of implementation.** One of the questions asked related to whether the CMS policy implementation is/was a gradual, incremental or fast-paced reform. The questionnaire replies from Czech Republic, Lithuania, Malta and Portugal indicated that the pace of CMS implementation had been gradual. The Portuguese respondent when referring to the introduction of CMS in the higher education sector highlighted the fact that this ‘policy change requires not only a mentality change in the way people think and act in terms of career decision-making and career development but also changes of learning practices’. The temptation to go for quick-fix solutions rather than to invest in more effective, long-term and systemic change should be avoided. This dimension connects with the important stage of CMS policy formulation where time needs to be devoted to consulting with all stakeholders in order to get people involved on board. Time-frames need to be put into place where immediate, medium- and long-term policy CMS goals are clear and specified.

**Monitoring process.** Hand in hand with the pace and time-frame dimension is monitoring of the policy implementation process, i.e. making sure that the policy process is under way. This dimension once again combines with the people dimension. One of the responsibilities of the co-ordinating unit for policy implementation mentioned above should involve not only monitoring the CMS implementation process but also communicating and collaborating with the different organisations undergoing this change and providing any direction and assistance as required. Regarding monitoring, Germany, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal and Slovenia report that there are preformed activities in those sectors where CMS policy is in place.

#### Conclusion

This study has suggested that the success of CMS policy implementation depends on a number of inter-linked factors. However, the way CMS policies are implemented and how CMS are delivered to citizens depends on a particular country’s cultural and social context and traditions. It is therefore worth reiterating the point made at the outset, namely that the six factors identified in this exploratory thematic study serve as a tentative source of insights and points for reflection in developing and implementing CMS policy.

## Appendix: Interesting/successful examples of CMS policy implementation

### Austria

**Talent/career portfolio in schools.** By means of the talent/career portfolio, students discover and develop their strengths and talents. Teachers encourage them to collect proof of their abilities and interests, including any certificates they have received, and documents from in and outside the school, which are then presented in a talent portfolio based on the school-wide enrichment model (SEM) (<http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/>).

The focus is not on so-called 'high potentials', the extremely talented students in a special field. The portfolio is a tool used to systematically gather and record information about abilities and interests. Students develop it autonomously, while teachers serve as counsellors/facilitators in the portfolio review process. Students alone decide what they want to include. Proof of abilities could focus on crafts, sports, history, mathematics/logic, languages, physical sciences, computers, business, musical performances, musical composition, course grades, and product evaluations. They can also put in degrees, feedback papers from interactions with others, samples of completed assignments, and other performance-based observations and assessments.

In the process, the students pick up important skills such as reflecting and evaluating. Based on this work at school, the main goal is to encourage each student to choose his/her first job or study based on awareness of personal competencies. If there is an economic crisis, the person has been trained not to give up, but rather to reflect confidently on personal potentials and to move on in his or her life path.

### Czech Republic

**National Guidance Forum (NGF).** The NGF was originally established in 2007 as an initiative of the

Educational and Psychological Counselling Institute of the Czech Republic. Since 2010, it has acted as a formally established consultative body on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The main aims of NGF formulated through the Statute of NGF are co-ordination of the guidance policies at the national level as well as informing the policy-makers in the fields of guidance, education and employment.

Since the establishment of NGF, these goals have been achieved mainly through the strengthening of mutual information between its members, notably the two key ministries, but also between other key members, such as professional associations in the guidance and counselling sector and NGOs. This process has led to building of ad-hoc partnerships between the NGO member organisations which have implemented a number of joint projects at local, regional or national level. An example of this co-operation is a National Guidance Award, a Czech Euroguidance Centre project involving a number of NGF members, who have contributed substantially to updating information on national guidance provision, previously marked by fragmentation and lack of a clear professional identity. In general, the NGF contribution to an integrated guidance policy can be identified mainly in a continuing dialogue between the two key ministries and other non-government members. This has led to a shared understanding of the key concepts and issues.

In 2011, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports invited the NGF members to contribute to preparation of a major ESF project aimed at the strategic development of guidance services in all administrative regions of the country. One of the institutional NGF members, the National Education Institute, was assigned the creation of the project proposal. Other institutional NGF members were invited to contribute with comments on the draft

project proposal. This process was completed by the end of 2011. The project has represented the first strategic initiative in guidance with a strong potential for influencing strategic guidance development in the country. The main goals and the key activities of the project have been very much informed by the ELGPN outputs and reflect its main priorities, framed through the four key aspects of guidance: career management skills development, access, co-ordination and co-operation, and quality assurance.

However, having contributed to the creation of the project design, the NGF was effectively excluded from further processing of the project preparation. By the time of writing, the project proposal has been processed through the department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport responsible for administration of ESF projects, without the NGF being involved in the process. Since the NGF has a unique capacity at the national level of assuring the quality of the project implementation, its exclusion from this process raises a number of issues to be considered at the national policy level, notably the transparency, merit, and quality assured through co-operation of organisations with an appropriate capacity for the implementation of the project.

## Germany

**Adult education: Profilpass.** The ProfilPASS® is a portfolio instrument to systematically review one's own life. In this way it records and assesses competences and abilities. It supports people by making them aware of personal strengths and weaknesses. The ProfilPASS assesses and evaluates competences and abilities that have been gained in all aspects of life: vocational training, voluntary work, employment, leisure time, family work, etc. The tool particularly focuses on competences gained in informal and non-formal learning contexts. It supports CMS acquisition and development as well as self-assessment through intensive reflection and evaluation of personal strengths, competences and interests, as

well as through goal-setting and an additional part concerning skills for the application process.

**School: Berufswahlpass and Profilpass.** In Germany, career orientation plays an important part in secondary school curricula, with a long tradition. In all the Länder, systematic vocational preparation and orientation are taught in a special subject which may be named differently (e.g. lessons in working, work-economy-technology) or embedded in other subjects. Here, career orientation and CMS are key contents.

In order to facilitate, support and document learning processes in this area, the portfolio Berufswahlpass (career choice passport) is used in 12 of the 16 Länder, integrated in lessons. The tool not only includes various offers, partners and information for career orientation, but also helps to assess and evaluate personal strengths and interests through self- and external assessment. Building on this, the tool also includes checklists on various topics such as matching career orientations and personal strengths. Thus, it seeks to assess career learning and encourages critical reflection and exchange with other learners. Through the resource-oriented portfolio approach of the Berufswahlpass, self-consciousness, self-esteem and self-efficacy are also strengthened.

The career orientation process and planning and the acquisition of CMS are supported and assessed through career guidance, also through co-operation with the guidance service of the PES. Furthermore, the passport helps the pupils with the documentation of the steps in the career choice process and with managing and valuing their documents.

The Berufswahlpass was developed as part of the programme 'School, Economy and Work' (funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research) and has been widely used in about 80% of general schools as an integral part of career education programmes since 2005. Continuous further development is ensured by a working group of the federal states using the tool, which also runs the website and organises further related activities. See: [www.Berufswahlpass.de](http://www.Berufswahlpass.de) and KSSLLL database.

## Hungary

**Schools.** The first National Core Curriculum (Hungarian abbreviation: NAT) issued in 1995 (restructured in 2003 and in 2007) specified pedagogical development in grades 1–10 in terms of ten cultural domains. One of the ten domains was the teaching of way-of-life and practical skills, including career orientation. The first NAT defined the percentage rate of way-of-life and practical skills to the total curriculum at 4–7% in grades 1–4, 5–9% in grades 5–6, 6–10% in grades 7–8 and finally 5–9% in grades 9–10.

Parallel with the release of the core curriculum, the teaching staff came to face a new challenge: to work out the corresponding local curricula. The cultural domain in question integrated three subjects: technology, domestic science and career orientation. The phrase '(career) guidance' in use before the change of regime gave way to '(career) orientation'. According to the relevant legislation, its general objective was to help pupils/students choose a career. This included, more specifically, the following components: self-knowledge development based on the identification of the individual's abilities and skills; experiential familiarisation with the content, requirements and access pathways, possibilities and alternatives of the most important careers and occupational branches; and reconciliation of aspirations and possibilities with realities. Pupils were to be made aware of the prospect of repeated career changes during their working life. Schools had to provide a comprehensive overview of the world of labour, matching the age of their students and their own possibilities. Consequently, it was necessary to provide for such conditions and activities as may help the pupils test their capabilities and become absorbed in the areas capturing their interest, in order to develop their self-knowledge and career knowledge. Orientation can only be effective if it is implemented over a longer period of time and if it exploits the possibilities inherent in the various subjects, lessons and extracurricular areas and activities in a concerted way.

**VET.** The first and second Vocational School Development Programmes (SZFP: Szakiskolai Fejlesztési Programme) were implemented by the National Institute of Vocational Education (Nemzeti Szak-képzési Intézet). 90 trade schools were involved in the first SZFP, and 70 additional trade schools in the second phase. 100 trade school teachers were trained. At the 9th class in the trade schools, according to the current public education law, schools could make their own decision on whether or not to teach career orientation for two classes per week (74 classes per school year).

The administration wanted the project to boost the development of vocational schools brought into a highly disadvantageous position by the extension of compulsory schooling to age 18. Within the SZFP, the development of orientation at vocational schools was assigned to Module G. This was worked out with a reduced content *ab ovo*, given the fact that this type of school provides no maturity certificate for graduating pupils. Consequently, the further education and placement options of pupils are limited to jobs and further training requiring no GCSE.

Many criticised career orientation development designed for the vocational schools as being a dead-end. Nevertheless, as a result of the development project, hundreds of vocational schools and their teaching staff were provided with further training in career orientation. The participating institutions and their teachers established a network. Furthermore, an electronic career guidance package was prepared, which is now accessible on DVD under the title SzakmaInfo.

**Employment.** Measure 3.1.1. of the Human Resources Development Operational Programme (Hungarian abbreviation: HEFOP) co-financed by the European Union included curriculum development for grades 1–12 in the competency area called 'career building' instead of 'orientation'. The activity was completed in March 2008. To date, 600 schools, 105,000 pupils and 8,000 teachers have taken part in the relevant project launched under the management of the former Sulinova Kht (legal successor: Educatio

Kht). The basis of the professional development was an application entitled *The Real Game*, imported earlier from Canada. The career building competency area defined its own guidelines as follows:

*Process principle.* If the activities representing the life-path are defined as creative activities, then, obviously, their series has a chronological dimension and that dimension appears, in the final analysis, as a process on the life-path. In essence, pupils are introduced to that aspect of the socialisation process which manifests itself in the form of activities. Teachers work with their pupils over a definite time interval, a 'frozen moment' (which, however, may be as long as a year). This is a short interval in terms of personality development and self-development. So they meet in a specific life-cycle stage. This is why the activities representing the point of departure of steps to be defined at a later date must have a process-like character.

*Development principle.* Both the individual and the pedagogical approach associates change, often defined as a new quality, with the concept of the life-path. Biological development typical in school age calls for the association of psychological development. That is, in the context of career building, the quality development of the individual personality traits is taken into consideration, to contribute thereby to personal development, career building and success.

*The principle of periodicity.* Periodicity, i.e. repetition, is present in the process of creative activity. The same experiences, events and circumstances will recur, albeit in different qualities. The repetitions may mark strongly interlinked or clearly separated phases. Repetition is an essential component, and it is motivated by the wish to fulfil ever more advanced requirements or objectives.

*The principle of consolidation.* It is a precondition of the activity that the personality traits ensuring

its continuous performance be present. The personality traits concerned consolidate gradually in time. The activity itself is defined or influenced exclusively by the consolidated personality traits.

*The principle of taking the positive circumstances into account.* Career building puts less emphasis on developing emotionally positive contents, personality traits and knowledge: it focuses instead on highlighting the existing ones. Stressing one's strengths is the basis of correct self-evaluation and the right level and quality of self-confidence.

*The support principle.* Career building is a supportive activity: it implies no direction or the assumption of responsibilities. Support is provided to help the client select what is best for him/her. This principle implies that one cannot decide for another person; one can only present the possibilities open for choice and make them aware of the possibility of matching the individual traits and the changing opportunities.

**Cross-sectoral.** One of the most important results of SROP 2.2.2, started in 2008, was building a core network of lifelong guidance professionals, working through a unified protocol and a newly developed national competency matrix. This matrix contains the most important competencies of a lifelong guidance professional that are expected from every relevant expert in Hungary.

## Lithuania

**CMS in higher education.** The Model of the career management services for students in higher education was approved by the Ministry of Education and Science in 2011 and is recommended by the Ministry to be implemented in the higher education sector. Developed as part of an EU-funded project implemented by Vilnius University in partnership with 27 other higher education institutions in Lithuania, the Model is an example of the agreement

reached between the Ministry, university authorities, guidance practitioners and experts. It represents the shared understanding of the nature and principles of career management services which should be provided to the students in higher education.

The Law on higher education and research (2009) refers only to the obligation of the higher education institution 'to provide career consultations to students', whereas the Model describes the overall system of career management services in higher education institutions: their mission, vision, goals, tasks and evaluation criteria, as well as the group of main career management services. The Model also includes description of principles of career management services provision, and organisational and financial issues.

An important role in the system of the career management services for students in higher education is given to the monitoring of the graduate's career and the career management services. The monitoring system complements the system of the career management services.

The career management services for students in HE include:

1. Career education – developing students' career management competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes).
2. Career evaluation – helping students acquire and apply knowledge about personal features relevant for career development.
3. Career counselling – helping students to solve career problems.
4. Career opportunities exploration – helping students acquire and apply knowledge about career opportunities in the career development process.
5. Job search – helping students acquire job-search skills and seek employment which meets their personal needs.

Career education is referred to as the core career management service for students in HE: the main

objective of all of the career services is development of students' CMS.

## Malta

**Job shadowing in schools.** Job shadowing experiences in the financial sector, health sector and IT sectors are being implemented in schools at national level. These are organised by the entities concerned and by the Student Services Department within the Directorate for Educational Services. This involves students' spending one week on the job, shadowing employees.

Job expos provide students with an opportunity to think concretely about their career path. Research suggests that students who have a career plan are more likely to remain in the school system. Another aim of this experience is to widen awareness of career paths. Often students are only aware of a small number of careers within a particular industry. Such reconsideration may mean a student needing a particular subject that s/he is not presently studying. For example, a student realised that having Accounts as an O-level would help her pursue her chosen career path: taking up this subject in her spare time, she was in time to sit for it at the end of Form 5. These job exposures are also aimed at motivating students who are in the secondary sector to study harder. Students often do so on becoming aware of subject/educational relevance. This experience also helps students to realise that they need to master a number of soft skills. Such skills need time to be acquired.

The experience is spread over a period of time, during which a number of job-searching skills are mastered: writing a letter of application, filling in a CV, preparation for an interview (for which students are also encouraged to look up information), and sitting for an interview. Through pre-experience emails sent to students, and class/one-to-one sessions to students participating in the job expo, as well as through a reflective logbook, the students are encouraged to go through employers' websites, engage in self-reflection and seek feedback from employers.

The career education programme of career lessons in Form 4 also gives students a good foundation of the skills necessary for the world of work. Students can then link what they have learned throughout the career lessons to what they have observed while on placement. Form 4 is a good year to expose students to such a career package.

**VET sector.** MQF Level 1 programmes have been introduced, with a two-hour weekly slot dedicated to personal development. The career aspect is also included across the curricula both in key skills and in vocational subjects. In addition, personal development sessions have been introduced for students following the MQF Level 3 programmes, with particular emphasis on the soft skills which are a necessity for employment.

## Portugal

**CMS in higher education.** A Career Self-Management Seminar (CSMS, forms A and B) has been developed and implemented by psychology teachers and researchers of the Career Guidance and Counselling Centre at the University of Minho. CSMS-A is intended to support career self-management of undergraduate students (career exploration, goal setting, design and implementation of action plans, monitoring and feedback). It consists of eight sessions of 120 minutes each, developed weekly in a classroom environment or at the career centre, with small groups of students from different majors (n =

8–10). CSMS-B is intended to support PhD students and research grant-holders from the same institution, also in the acquisition or development of career strategic behaviours. It consists of seven sessions of 90 minutes each, developed weekly in the career centre, with small groups of participants from different scientific domains (n = 6–8). Both forms of the SCMS are structured into three main blocks of sessions, in a tentative effort to address three components of the career construction process: vocational personality, career adaptability, and life themes. However, special emphasis is given to career adaptability resources.

The process and results of this career intervention model are assessed through the use of checklists, questionnaires and structured interviews. Successful participants in the CSMS-A can apply to be a Career Self-Management Mentor of younger students at the university. The Career Self-Management Mentorship Programme is a complementary initiative developed by the same team of psychology scholars and includes continued supervision of SCSM Mentors by the team. SCSM Mentors is recognised by the University of Minho for purposes of the Diploma Supplement (DS). The DS is recommended by the Bologna Declaration, and has become one of the main tools to facilitate the mobility and employability of graduates. The aim of the DS is to provide enough data free from any value-judgements to promote the international transparency and fair academic and professional recognition of qualifications (diplomas, degrees, certificates).



**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. The purpose of the Network is to promote co-operation and systems development at member-country level in implementing the priorities identified in EU 2020 strategies and EU Resolutions on Lifelong Guidance (2004; 2008). The Network was established in 2007 by the member-states; the Commission supports its activities under the Lifelong Learning Programme.

**CAREER MANAGEMENT SKILLS (CMS)** policy implementation brings with it a number of challenges. This concept note aims to identify elements that support policy development and implementation in relation to CMS, as well as those that can prove to be an obstacle to policy implementation. The issues highlighted are supported by theory and experiences observed in a number of ELGPN member countries.

The concept note has been commissioned by ELGPN, and supported by a reference group drawn from its members. The views expressed, however, are those of its authors and do not necessarily represent the views of ELGPN or its member-countries.

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