European Lifelong Guidance Policies: Progress Report 2011–12

A REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE EUROPEAN LIFELONG GUIDANCE POLICY NETWORK 2011–12

ELGPN

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GUIDANCE POLICY
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This is an independent report prepared by the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN), a Member State network in receipt of EU financial support under the Lifelong Learning Programme. The views expressed are those of ELGPN and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission or any person acting on behalf of the Commission.

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Executive summary

The European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) aims to assist the European Union member-states (and the neighbouring countries eligible for the Lifelong Learning Programme) and the European Commission in developing European co-operation on lifelong guidance in both the education and the employment sectors. Its purpose is to promote co-operation and systems development at member-country level in implementing the priorities identified in the EU Resolutions on Lifelong Guidance (2004; 2008). The network was established by the member-states; the Commission supports its activities under the Lifelong Learning Programme. As a member-state-driven network, it also represents an innovative form of the Open Method of Co-ordination within the European Union (EU), which could be applicable in other areas too.

The ELGPN was formally established in December 2007; during 2008 its activities focused mainly on establishing its structures and processes. Its first major work programme was implemented in 2009-10. The present report covers its activities during its second major work programme, in 2011–12.

Section 1 outlines the structure, processes and activities of the ELGPN. It describes its origins and evolution, the rationale for the 2011–12 work programme, and the processes through which it was implemented. It notes that, while maintaining a cross-cutting approach to lifelong guidance policy development across sectors, a primary objective has been to deepen the interfaces with six policy sectors in particular (schools; VET; higher education; adult education; employment; social inclusion), and to shift from conceptual work to policy implementation, with more structured co-operation across the four transversal ELGPN themes (career management skills; access; quality and evidence; co-operation and co-ordination). It goes on to present the evaluation strategy adopted, and the main outcomes of the collaborative work. These have included, in particular, a Resource Kit to help policy-makers and other stakeholders to review existing lifelong guidance provision within their country or region, and to identify issues requiring attention and gaps that need to be filled, drawing from practices in other European countries.

Section 2 reports on the work of the four ELGPN Work Packages. Each section comprises four sub-sections: activities; key conclusions; links to other WP themes; and next steps.

Section 2.1 reports the work of Work Package 1 on career management skills (CMS). Key conclusions include:

- CMS cannot solve structural problems related to competitiveness, but can play a role in a range of areas related to employability, productivity and economic modernisation. They can also contribute to establishing a healthy life-work balance.
- The promotion of CMS is more likely to be successful when linked to the National Qualifications Framework and to the EU Key Competences framework.
- There is a need to have a broad perspective on CMS – not just preparing *for* work, but educating *about* work, so that individuals are aware of their rights.
- CMS should focus not only on the skills needed to choose and look for work, but also on entrepreneurship.

Section 2.2 reports the work of Work Package 2 on access. Key conclusions include:

- The importance of validation of non-formal and informal learning is now widely recognised, but the level of implementation varies. Similarly, although the need for guidance services within these processes is well understood, the guidance support in most cases still needs to be developed, and at best is in progress. Guidance practitioners should be one of the key contributors to the validation process.
- Services need to be accessible at different places in different localities, linked to using more centralised resources. It is accordingly important to improve national, regional and local guidance service delivery to support an inte-

grated or comprehensive approach to social inclusion, active citizenship, lifelong learning, full employment, and future skills and qualifications.

- While more traditional services are widely used in member countries for almost all target-groups, online tools have been developed or are in the process of being developed in almost all of them. A good balance and a meaningful combination between traditional and online methods (following the principle: log in, walk in, phone in and look in) should be available, so as to make the overall guidance service delivery as attractive and useful as possible for all citizens.
- Developing integrated all-age information and guidance services and/or comprehensive services for all target-groups is a demanding task for member countries and calls for renewed institutional structures, a co-operative culture and new methods of working.

Section 2.3 reports the work of Work Package 3 on co-operation and co-ordination. Key conclusions include:

- In their lifelong guidance provision, most European countries face the challenge of fragmentation and sectorising. Services tend to work in structural silos. Nonetheless, they are responsible for providing parts of guidance in a lifelong perspective, which ideally would imply a seamless and coherent lifelong guidance system. At present, this is a vision for the future, rather than a reality, in most countries.
- Some basic difficulties still exist in many countries in convincing different ministries with different portfolios to co-operate, let alone to co-ordinate their efforts in a cross-sectoral manner.
- Despite this, most European countries have now developed national lifelong guidance forums or other co-operation and co-ordina-

tion mechanisms. These can serve as vehicles for improving coherence and avoiding overlaps. They need to be complemented by similar mechanisms at regional and local levels.

- Such mechanisms take very different forms in different countries, not least in the balance they adopt between communication, co-operation and co-ordination, and between reactive, critical and proactive approaches to their role.

Section 2.4 reports the work of Work Package 4 on quality and evidence. Key conclusions include:

- The balance between quality assurance and evidence should be strongly influenced by a small number of agreed quality elements, criteria and indicators for measurement that can be tested and applied in practice, supported by examples of possible data, in the five areas identified in the Quality Assurance and Evidence-base (QAE) Framework developed by ELGPN: practitioner competence; citizen/user involvement; service provision and improvement; cost-benefits to governments; and cost-benefits to individuals.
- There is an urgent imperative to improve knowledge and understanding of effective evidence-based policies, including quality-assurance systems and accountability frameworks. Investments made in lifelong guidance systems and services must demonstrate more clearly the added-value returns for individuals, communities and societies.
- The aims of quality-assurance systems and mechanisms are to improve efficiency in service provision, to increase institutional financial accountability and to create transparency from the perspective of the citizen. The latter is often neglected by both policy-makers and service providers.
- In many countries, quality-assurance frameworks have evolved which contribute to the gathering, analysis and presentation of data,

helping to inform and develop lifelong guidance policies and practices. However, there is still a paucity of data relating to costs and benefits, broken down for analysis by specific target group(s) and/or by specific types of interventions. Lessons need to be learned from allied sectors in developing more robust accountability data.

Section 3 reports on EU policy developments related to lifelong guidance. It outlines the components of the Europe 2020 Strategy which are relevant to lifelong guidance, including its headline targets and flagship initiatives. Within this framework, relevant priorities include:

- Reducing early school-leaving.
- Increasing learning mobility.
- Making VET more attractive.
- Modernising higher education.
- Promoting adult learning and validation of non-formal and informal learning.
- Combating youth unemployment.
- Implementing flexicurity policies.
- Fighting poverty and social exclusion.

The key policy documents and actions are then outlined in detail, in relation to schools (Section 3.2), VET (Section 3.3), higher education (Section 3.4), adult education (Section 3.5), employment (Section 3.6) and social inclusion (Section 3.7). Each section includes comments on the involvement of ELGPN and possible next steps.

Section 4 reports on the ELGPN evaluation strategy and on the main evaluation results in relation to five areas: the management of the Network; learning outcomes from the thematic activities; the relevance of the ELGPN 2012 outputs; impact at national level; and the ELGPN as a member-state-driven Network. It notes that, while some suggestions for improvement were offered, ELGPN members were very satisfied with the management and operation of the Network and the general outcomes of its work. They also com-

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mented positively on ELGPN's impact at national level, though the nature and level of this impact varied across countries. A key strength of the Network was the strong ownership of its activities expressed by the national delegations.

Section 5 offers a vision for the future, to inform the next work programme (2013-14). It proposes that the working structure of the Network should be modified according to the new needs of the Europe 2020 Strategy and its flagship initiatives. In particular, the next phase of ELGPN's work should concentrate on three main activities:

- dissemination and application of the Resource Kit in each member country, with support from clusters of other countries (Policy Review Clusters);

- output-oriented Thematic Task Groups;
- review and further development of the Resource Kit, possibly to inform the development of a European Framework for Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems Development, which could help to establish lifelong guidance as a policy area in its own right.

In addition, the Commission has indicated its intention to conduct an external evaluation of the Network during 2013. The outcomes will be useful in reviewing the future of the ELGPN, including its structure and goals.

Acknowledgements

This report is the result of the collective efforts of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). It reflects contributions from all of those participating in the network, in particular:

- The national delegations which defined their priorities within the ELGPN 2011–12 work programme, illuminating these themes from their own perspectives.
- The host countries of the Plenary Meetings, and also of the Thematic Activities with their examples of national policies and case studies to support mutual learning.
- The officials of the Cyprus Government who advanced the work of the ELGPN through their hosting of the EU Presidency Conference.
- The representatives of partner organisations who have participated in the work programme, including Mika Launikari (Cedefop), Helmut Zelloth (ETF), Karen Schober (IAEVG), Dr Gerhart Rott (FEDORA), Dr John McCarthy (ICCDPP) and Dr Wolfgang Müller (EU PES Network).

- The representatives of the lead countries for each Thematic Activity, who have provided leadership for the activity in co-operation with the ELGPN Co-ordinator and have managed the preparation of the relevant sections of this report:
  - WP1: Jasmin Muhic, Czech Republic.
  - WP2: Michel Lefranc, France; Gudrun Birna Kjartansdóttir and Dr Guðbjörg Vilhjálmsdóttir, Iceland.
  - WP3: Dr Peter Härtel, Austria.
  - WP4: Dr Tibor Borbély-Pecze, Hungary.
- The contracted experts who prepared prior briefing papers and reflection notes for the Thematic Activity meetings as well as drafting the relevant sections for this report:
  - WP1: Professor Ronald Sultana, Malta.
  - WP2: Professor Fusûn Akkök, Turkey.
  - WP3: Professor Peter Plant, Denmark.
  - WP4: Dr Deirdre Hughes, UK.
  - TG(a): Françoise Divisia, France.
  - TG(b): Professor Tony Watts, UK.
- Dr Charles Jackson, for his work on the ELGPN Glossary.

Section 1: Structure, processes and activities of the ELGPN 2011–12[1]

1.1 Origins

The European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) was established in 2007, with the aim of assisting its member countries (which include not only EU member-states but also candidate countries and European Economic Area countries) and the European Commission in developing European co-operation on lifelong guidance in both the education and the employment sectors.

An inaugural meeting to establish the network took place on 7–8 May 2007 in Helsinki. Delegations from the member-states were invited to clarify their expectations and intentions regarding the network. A total of 23 countries attended the meeting, together with representatives from the Commission, FEDORA, the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG), the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy (ICCDPP) and

the European Social Partners. The participating countries agreed to the establishment of ELGPN and agreed to participate in the network as members or observers, subject to written confirmation. The European and international bodies present expressed their willingness to continue their support for and involvement in the process. Later both the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and the European Training Foundation (ETF) indicated their willingness to co-operate with the new network. The ELGPN was finally established by a contract between the Network Co-ordinator and the Commission's DG EAC in December 2007.

The role and aims of the Network were endorsed in the second EU Council Resolution passed in 2008. In 2012 the ELGPN has consisted of 29 member countries (AT, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, GB, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LV, LT, LU, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), with 2 additional observer countries (BE, BG). The composition of their delegations

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[1] This section has been prepared by Dr Raimo Vuorinen, Co-ordinator of ELGPN.

is outlined in Annex 1. Through appropriate liaison arrangements, the Network also ensures regular contact with other relevant bodies and networks at European and international levels: IAEVG, the European Forum for Student Guidance (Fedora) (now merged with the European Association for International Education), Cedefop, ETF, ICCDPP, the Public Employment Services (PES) Network, Euroguidance, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the European Youth Forum.

During its three first phases (2007–12), the ELGPN has been co-ordinated by a team from Finland. The Finnish Ministry of Education and the Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy designated the co-ordination task to the Finnish Institute for Educational Research at the University of Jyväskylä. This unit convenes the Network and supports the implementation of its initiatives. The ELGPN members appoint a Steering Group with six members to ensure effective management of the Network and to support the Co-ordinator in defining the priorities and budget allocation within the work programme. ELGPN liaises closely with the European Commission and with Cedefop and ETF. It also utilises the support of a number of contracted consultants.

1.2 Rationale and implementation of the 2011–12 Work Programme

During the initial phase (2008), the ELGPN focused mainly on establishing its structures and processes. The second phase (2009–10) was built around the four thematic activities identified in the 2004 and 2008 Resolutions: career management skills; access, including accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL); co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms in guidance policy and systems development; and quality assurance and evidence base for policy and systems development. The 2009–10 Progress

Report[2] outlined the key outcomes of the Network's thematic activities and linked the Network to the policy drivers influencing it. The report also indicated implications for future ELGPN work.

The 2011–12 Work Programme was designed to build on the experience and development of the first two phases and to improve the internal efficiency of the Network. During this period the Lisbon Strategy has coincided with the economic downturn, leading to a significant increase in both unemployment and under-employment across most ELGPN member countries. The awareness of the need for improved anticipation and matching of labour market skills appears in most recent EU policy documents proposed by the Commission and adopted by the Council, both on education and on employment. This provides a challenge to lifelong guidance services, but also potentially enhances the significance of the policy contributions they can make.

While maintaining a transversal overview of lifelong guidance policy development, ELGPN has examined how guidance as an integral cross-cutting element can contribute to EU policy development in six key areas in particular: schools, VET, higher education, adult education, employment and social inclusion. The aim has been to deepen the interfaces with these policy areas and to shift the ELGPN activities from conceptual work to policy implementation, with more structured co-operation across the themes.

The relationship between the four themes of the ELGPN Work Programme 2011–12 is outlined in Figure 1. In brief, Work Package 3 (co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms) addresses the policy process; Work Package 2 (access) and Work Package 4 (quality) examine two key cross-sectoral policy issues; Work Package 1 (career management skills) addresses the sought citizen outcomes; and the other part of Work Package 4 (evidence base) addresses the sought policy outcomes.

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[2]   ELGPN (2010). *Lifelong Guidance Policies: Work in Progress. A Report on the Work of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network 2008– 10*. http://elgpn.eu.
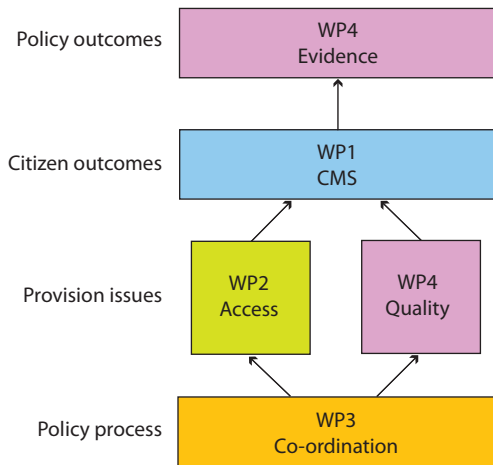
Figure 1: *Model indicating the relationship between the Work Packages*

These four thematic activities have been implemented through a consistent process. Each of the Work Packages has consisted of 14–22 participating countries, plus one or sometimes two lead countries, and a contracted consultant to support the activity in co-operation with the ELGPN Co-ordinator. In each case, the programme included two separate thematic field visits and a third synthesis meeting (see Annex 3). Each country identified the themes in which they wished to participate, and was asked to reflect in advance on how these themes could enhance the development of their national policies and practices, and their expectations and aspirations for the theme. In addition, the field visits provided opportunities for the host countries to influence their own policies and practices, and to involve key policy-makers within these processes. Time was also allocated to the development of the ELGPN 2011–12 outputs.

The ELGPN 2011–12 Work Programme further included a Task Group, with two sub-groups performing distinct tasks. Sub-group (a) focused on European education & training and employment policy analysis from a lifelong guidance perspective, while sub-group (b) worked on developing concrete tools for policy-makers; with support from two contracted consultants. The Task Group also focused on the ELGPN's communication strategy and gov-

ernance, and the transversal elements of the Work Programme.

1.3   Evaluation strategy

Internal evaluation of the ELGPN was conducted during the third phase 2011–12. The European Commission has proposed a more detailed external evaluation of the Network in 2013. For the present Progress Report, ELGPN has adopted a community-based evaluation approach which aims at encouraging active participation in the evaluation process from all involved communities and stakeholders, with a primary objective to support the ongoing development of the Network. An additional aim of the 2011–12 evaluation has been to analyse the role of ELGPN in policy development, especially the interaction between EU member-states, and between member-states and the European Commission, in the context of a member-state-led European policy network supported by the European Union. Attention was paid to the Open Method of Co-ordination as one of the EU's lead instruments for policy-steering purposes. The evaluation (see Section 4) aimed to identify some of the key issues, processes, dynamics and potential tensions that arise in the effort to co-construct policy directions across Europe.

1.4   Key outcomes 2011–12

During the ELGPN Work Programme 2011–12, a principal aim has been to produce a Resource Kit for policy-makers to help policy-makers and other stakeholders to review existing lifelong guidance provision within their country or region, and to identify issues requiring attention and gaps that need to be filled, drawing from practices in other European countries. The aim of this Resource Kit is to support policy review and peer learning processes both within and between countries. It is being published alongside this report as a stand-alone document during the 4th

European Conference on Lifelong Guidance Policies (24 October 2012) under the Cyprus EU Presidency. Other outputs from the Work Programme include ELGPN commissioned Concept Notes on flexicurity[3] and youth unemployment[4], as well as an ELGPN glossary on lifelong guidance policy development. All are available on the ELGPN website.

At national level, the ELGPN members have indicated examples of the catalytic impact and added value on their national guidance policy development (see Annex 10). They have actively shared experiences in developing online services for guidance and in developing national strategies or other statutory documents in lifelong guidance. There has also been evidence of progress in the development of national co-ordination mechanisms (see Annex 4).

In the context of Europe 2020 and other EU policies in education, training and employment, ELGPN has sought to have a stronger impact on relevant policy areas at EU and member-country levels, and to develop stronger tools and processes to help member countries in policy development and implementation. As part of this, ELGPN has strengthened its co-operation and participation with different working groups in the EU policy development process, in both education and employment sectors. A review of relevant EU policy documents and processes is provided in Section 3. By establishing a forum for a dialogue on lifelong guidance as a cross-cutting theme

across different policy sectors, 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.

In addition to the inspirations for lifelong guidance policy development in the ELGPN member countries, there has been emerging interest in the Network's activities outside the EU. In December 2011 Hungary hosted the 6th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy. The Symposium Communiqué recommended that, through ICCDPP and the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG), links should be strengthened between ELGPN and other symposium countries, to enable the strong collaborative structures and processes within ELGPN to be enriched by practices from countries outside Europe, for mutual benefit. It also recommended that such links should include, but extend beyond, global sharing of ELGPN publications and tools – recognising that good practice is based on sharing learning, not importing models.

A detailed description of the Work Package activities is provided in Section 2, and of ELGPN links with EU policy processes in Section 3. An evaluation of the key outcomes and perceived impact of the Network is covered in Section 4. Implications for the future of ELGPN are presented in Section 5.

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[3] Sultana, R. (2011). *Flexicurity: Implications for Lifelong Career Guidance*. Concept Note commissioned by ELGPN.

[4] Hughes, D. & Borbély-Pecze, T.B. (2012). *Youth Unemployment: a Crisis in Our Midst – the Role of Lifelong Guidance Policies in Addressing Labour Supply and Demand.* Concept Note commissioned by ELGPN.

Section 2: Work Package reports

2.1 Work Package 1 (Career Management Skills)

Participating countries: AT, CZ, DE, DK, FI, HR, IT, LT, LV, LU, MT, NO, PT, SI, SK
Lead country: CZ
Consultant: Professor Ronald Sultana

2.1.1 Activities

WP1 members continued with their reflection on various aspects of Career Management Skills (CMS), extending their discussions to consider (a) such skills in different contexts, and (b) the tools that could be developed in order to promote good practice in the learning and assessment of CMS. The goals for 2011–12 included:

- A greater emphasis on policy-related issues when considering CMS in different sectors and contexts.

- An identification of guidelines for CMS development, in order to assist member countries in developing their own CMS programmes and frameworks.
- An in-depth study of the key elements that facilitate or hinder the implementation of CMS programmes, leading to an identification of the appropriate policy environments that need to be created for successful CMS promotion.
- A focus on CMS with adults, in the context of Public Employment Services, and as offered by employers and trade unions.
- A focus on CMS programmes offered in higher education settings, including universities.
- A consideration of the training of guidance professionals and others involved in delivering CMS.

Having addressed both programme and teaching/learning issues during the first phase of the ELGPN's activities, the focus would now be on the assessment of CMS learning.

Three WP1 meetings were held during this period:

- A first peer-learning event took place in Lisbon on 28–29 March 2011. Members looked at Portuguese and international examples of how CMS were promoted in university settings, with an input from FEDORA (European Forum for Student Guidance). Staff involved in the training of career guidance practitioners shared information about their programme and challenges. Public Employment Service inputs in the promotion of CMS were also discussed. In addition, the role of employees in promoting CMS was discussed with a representative from the employers' confederation.
- A second meeting took place in Toulouse on 14–15 November 2011. Members shared examples of interesting practice concerning the use of reflective portfolios in order to support learning of CMS, and as a tool to assess mastery, particularly in education settings, including universities.
- The synthesis meeting was held in Malta on 27–28 March 2012. Members discussed two key outputs produced by task groups: the Guidelines for Career Management Skills Development (for a description of the development of these Guidelines, see Annex 7), and the Thematic Study on Success Factors in Implementing CMS Policy (see Annex 8). In addition, they gave feedback regarding the ELGPN's Resource Kit and Progress Report, and made proposals regarding the Network's future work programme.

2.1.2 Key conclusions

In relation to the nature of CMS:
- CMS are important and can be useful, but cannot solve structural problems related to competitiveness. They can play a role, however, in a range of areas, including ones that are perhaps not normally considered in discussions

about CMS, such as: skills in dealing with new productive processes, health and environment-related skills, intercultural skills, management skills, creativity, and entrepreneurship – all of which are a cornerstone of employability and productivity, and essential to the process of economic modernisation. CMS also contribute to establishing a healthy life-work balance, and should not focus on employment to the exclusion of other aspects of one's life.

In relation to developing a CMS framework:
- The promotion of CMS is more likely to be successful when linked to the National Qualifications Framework and to the EU Key Competences framework.
- There is a need to have a broad perspective on CMS – not just preparing *for* work, but educating *about* work, so that individuals are aware of their rights.
- CMS should focus not only on the skills needed to choose and look for work, but also on entrepreneurship.

In relation to CMS in higher education contexts:
- Career management competences should be considered within the context of broader processes and dynamics that mark the area of higher learning in Europe, such as the Bologna Process. These dynamics include the emphasis on mobility, the shift away from teaching to learning, and the focus on employability.
- Student services – particularly guidance and counselling services – play a key role in supporting the shift to student-centred learning, to active and self-directed learning, and to developing competences that enhance employability.
- Awarding credit to CMS learning, in ways that contribute to overall certification in higher education, can reinforce the legitimacy of CMS programmes.
- Despite the different learning and curricular traditions, cultures and histories of higher

education systems across Europe, common ground and common trends can be identified. These include the connections that are being made between teaching, student-centred learning, student services, and co-operation with employers. These connections lead to new kinds of learning settings which support work-related, self-reflective learning, underpinned by CMS.

In relation to CMS in Public Employment Service (PES) contexts:

- In PES settings, it is useful to differentiate between employment advisers who focus mainly on job broking and placement, and those with more advanced skills who provide deeper elements of career guidance, and who are usually more focused on personal assessment, on personal action planning, and on longer-term career development. The latter require targeted training in order to deliver CMS more effectively.

- In Public Employment Service settings, the focus on employability should not reduce CMS to an exclusive concern with 'immediacy', i.e. what works in the short-term to enable individuals to enter the world of work. Other aspects of their formation, such as active citizenship, or competences in creativity and critical analysis, are also important.

- Basic CMS that serve the unemployed in getting ahead in the employment queue include: mastery of reading, writing and mathematics skills, a sense of initiative and of creativity, the ability to be self-directed in looking for opportunities, persistence, flexibility and adaptability, optimism, risk-taking, knowing how to work in teams, and remaining open to learning.

- In some national settings, PES provide an all-age guidance service setting up a formal or an implicit standard of CMS development. In such cases it is important to develop effective models of co-operation between the employment and

the education sector, especially in respect to the need for a shared understanding of CMS development and related work methodologies. It is equally important for PES staff to build on the CMS that have already been developed by career guidance workers and teachers in the education sector.

In relation to the training of staff involved in delivering CMS:

- There is a noticeable shift away from an approach in the training of career guidance staff that is mostly based on psychology to one that is more constructionist and multi-disciplinary in nature.

- 'Employability' should be a central concept in the training of career guidance staff, supporting the melding of individual and organisational approaches, and emphasising the training of competences for life, not just for work.

In relation to the assessment of CMS learning:

- In assessing CMS learning, the emphasis should not only be on *savoir* and *savoir faire*, but also on the *savoir être* dimension, typical of a rounded education.

- Portfolios are an appropriate strategy to assess career learning, in that they facilitate critical reflection on the part of learners (whether young or adult), focus on process rather than merely on outcomes, and provide opportunities for learners to interact with others in order to engage in meaningful career conversations. Furthermore, portfolios help to centralise information and reflection in one 'physical' space, enabling coherence in the learner's thinking and research relating to employment.

- Some portfolios strive to look at career learning from a lifelong perspective. Such 'lifelong' approaches can support career guidance practices that give pride of place to approaches informed by constructivist psychology, with an emphasis on meta-cognition and on the

co-construction of meaning on the basis of reflection on learning achieved in different life contexts.

- Currently the use of portfolios has been mostly present in the education area, notably within initial education. An effective utilisation of portfolios at points of transition between various education levels and from education to work remains a challenge. There is a need for integrated cross-sectoral policies to enable using portfolios as a tool for a CMS development in a lifelong perspective.

- Portfolio-type tools can function as alternative credentialing instruments, particularly for those students who might have been less successful in gaining formal paper qualifications. They therefore can contribute to the equity agenda through promoting Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL).

- There are significant ethical challenges concerning issues of access to portfolio material. Some of these challenges are particularly serious in the case of digital portfolios.

2.1.3 Links to other WP themes

- **WP2:**
  - The promotion of CMS in a range of contexts supports the goal of increasing access to career guidance services throughout the life course.
  - The trend to provide credit-bearing study units in higher education contexts enhances access to career guidance services.
  - Career Learning Portfolios can further enhance access to career guidance services: students who might not be willing to use, or might not even be aware of, one-to-one or group career guidance services, might engage more willingly with career learning through a Career Learning Portfolio.

- **WP3:**
  - CMS is best taught in a collaborative manner, drawing on the strengths of different partners, such as educators, employers, PES staff, and trade union organisations. CMS thus has the potential to foster cross-sectoral collaboration within an organised programme of service delivery.
  - Learners using Career Learning Portfolios can benefit from feedback from teachers, from employment officers, and from employers networked by the PES, thus facilitating cross-sectoral collaboration.
  - The outcomes of the study on obstacles to policy implementation are particularly relevant to the ELGPN focus on cross-sectoral collaboration.

- **WP4:**
  - The promotion of specialised training of staff involved in delivering CMS has great potential in enhancing quality in career guidance services.
  - The constructivist, learning-oriented and reflexive approach to career thinking and career development promoted through the use of Career Learning Portfolios has great potential in improving the quality and impact of career guidance services.

2.1.4 Next steps

- Aspects of CMS policy development that need to be addressed in greater depth include (a) the role of CMS in preventing early disengagement from school, (b) the training of staff to deliver CMS, and (c) the delivery of CMS in TVET settings.

- The development of CMS policies would be further enhanced if evidence could be generated to show that the learning of CMS has a positive impact on career development.

- CMS policies stand a greater chance of attracting policy-makers' attention if connections with Europe-wide processes are established. An example of this is the European Skills Passport, which could include CMS in the profile of skills being integrated into the Passport.

2.2 Work Package 2 (Widening Access)

Participating countries: AT, CY, CZ, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, IS, LV, NL, NO, SK, TR, UK
Lead countries: FR, IS
Consultant: Professor Fusun Akkök

2.2.1 Activities

The activities of Work Package 2 (WP2) in 2011–12 built on its previous 2009–10 outcomes and went more deeply into some topics: for example, the role of guidance in validation of non-formal and informal learning, and how to reach various target groups using ICT tools. The goals for 2011–12 were to work on:

- Widening access to information, guidance and counselling services for all citizens, particularly for young people at risk of early school-leaving, for adults at work and for active ageing.
- Access to higher education: in particular, transitions between VET and higher education, information for students and counselling services within universities.
- Providing access to adequate guidance and counselling services in the validation processes for non-formal and informal learning.
- The competences of practitioners, teachers, and other stakeholders.
- The use of ICT in the context of both sectoral approaches and integrated services for all ages.

Three meetings were held:

- The theme of the first peer-learning event in Utrecht, The Netherlands, was the role of guidance in the process of validation of informal/non-formal learning, providing access to adequate guidance and counselling services in the validation of non-formal and informal learning, and the qualifications and competences of practitioners needed to support individuals in this process.
- The theme of the second visit in Copenhagen, Denmark, was the use of ICT in both targeted approaches and integrated services for all ages: the main focus was on widening access to information, guidance and counselling services for all citizens, particularly for young people at risk of early school-leaving, for adults (employed, unemployed and in transition), and for active ageing.
- The synthesis meeting in Warsaw reviewed the Resource Kit and Progress Report, and provided feedback on the Glossary and ELGPN's future work programme. Austria, Germany and Poland made presentations on new initiatives for different target-groups, including at-risk students, those over 50 and/or in transition to retirement, and adults in general.

2.2.2 Key conclusions

- The importance of validation of non-formal and informal learning is now widely recognised, but the level of implementation varies. Similarly, although the need for guidance services within these processes is well understood, the guidance support in most cases still needs to be developed, and at best is in progress. As stated in the relevant ELGPN policy briefing[5], 'the Commission identifies the lack of information, support and guidance: even in countries where more systematic procedures have been established, empowerment of individuals often remains low, partly due to ignorance and difficulties in using and understanding the procedures'.
- Guidance practitioners are one of the key practitioners in the validation process. Their role

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[5] Divisia, F. (2011). Policy briefing related to the role of guidance within the process of validation of informal and non-formal learning from an EU perspective.

starts with reaching out to engage and motivate the potential candidates for validation, then preparing the candidate for assessment, and finally guiding them after the assessment decision. Guidance practitioners have a role in informing individuals who volunteer for validation on the added value, on what to expect, on what standards are required, and on the outcomes. At the end of the validation process, individuals need to be informed about potential routes for further qualifications.

- A distinction can be drawn between guidance related specifically to assessment issues and more general guidance. These two processes will require different competences on the part of the professionals delivering the guidance.

- Services need to be accessible at different places in different localities, linked to using more centralised resources. It is accordingly important to improve national, regional and local guidance service delivery to support an integrated or comprehensive approach to social inclusion, active citizenship, lifelong learning, full employment, and future skills and qualifications.

- While more traditional services are widely used in member countries for almost all target-groups, online tools have been developed or are in the process of being developed in almost all of them. A good balance and a meaningful combination between traditional and online methods (following the principle: log in, walk in, phone in and look in) should be available, so as to make the overall guidance service delivery as attractive and useful as possible for all citizens.

- Developing integrated all-age information and guidance services and/or comprehensive services for all target-groups is a demanding task for member countries and calls for renewed institutional structures, a co-operative culture and new methods of working. Denmark is an

example of a country where such services are available: face-to-face services are integrated with the National Guidance Portal, e-guidance, youth database and Virtual Resource Centre; e-guidance is provided via e-mail, SMS, telephone and chat, and is accessible to everyone, though the main target group is those in formal education.

- The demands placed on guidance practitioners are constantly increasing, due to changes in society and reforms in education and employment policies. Furthermore, the working environments of guidance practitioners and their target groups are becoming more diverse all over Europe. This creates an increased need for continuing professional development on the part of guidance practitioners and teachers.

- The European Council considers guidance for older workers as an instrument for promoting active ageing. Some member countries, however, are developing services aimed specifically at those who are aged 50+ or in transition to retirement. For example, the Retirement Compass in Germany is a project specifically designed for adults in transition from work to retirement. In Spain, courses of cultural activation/motivation for people over 50 are available, within a more flexible concept of higher education than the traditional one, to promote skill upgrading of the ageing population.

- Currently, the unemployment rate is high in most countries. Guidance is one of the tools which make it possible to respond to unemployment both at a societal level (workforce balance, social inclusion policies) and at an individual level, recognising that some workers may want to leave work as they get older whereas others may want to stay on. This also calls for extended guidance provision for older workers, whether for retention or for phased retirement.

- Widening access needs to include all ages and domains, from primary-school pupils to the

third age, and covering people engaged in voluntary work.

2.2.3   Links to other WP themes

- **WP1:**
  - Relevance of portfolio development to validating informal and non-formal learning, allowing the individual candidate to contribute actively to the collection of evidence: link with the development of CMS; link with Europass (towards an integrated Europass Skills Passport).
  - Digital portfolios and CMS: text, audio, graphic, video-based presentation.

- **WP3:**
  - Co-operation/co-ordination/networking between general guidance services and training and validation providers.
  - Co-operation/co-ordination/networking between guidance and training providers for groups with special needs.
  - Cross-sectoral co-operation between education and employment sectors.

- **WP4:**
  - Defining quality criteria for guidance delivery and competences/content of training for guidance practitioners.
  - Defining quality standards for guidance practitioners in all settings, including in the validation process.
  - Creating indicators to measure the quality of guidance regarding different ways of access and also in validation processes for informal/non-formal learning.
  - Taking the voice of users into account; access of users to the development of guidance services (evaluation, user surveys), to policy-making and to maintenance of guidance services.

2.2.4   Next steps

- Stronger measures need to be introduced in member countries to guarantee open access for all citizens to a seamless information, advice and guidance system that will support them in making choices and managing transitions as learners and workers. Access to guidance services needs to be widened to cover all forms of learning (formal, informal and non-formal) for all citizens from childhood to retirement, including CMS and employability.
- Developing integrated all-age information and guidance services and/or comprehensive services for all target groups is a demanding task for member countries. An important challenge is how to manage successfully the application of modern information and communications technologies to guidance delivery, maintenance and sustainability of services, as well as updating labour market information. Additional dimensions include: how improved access to guidance services can support the achievement of national education, training and labour market goals[6]; designing and managing the necessary guidance resources; and measuring their impact through evidence-based research.
- Although the European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning[7] indicate that guidance services should be included within the validation process, with guidance practitioners in the validation team, there is a need for better framed and developed services to widen access to such validation.
- In order to simplify access, more coherence is needed between Europass and national portfo-

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[6]   Cedefop (2011). *Lifelong Guidance across Europe: Reviewing Policy Progress and Future Prospects*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

[7]   Cedefop (2009). *European Guidelines on the Validation of Informal and Non-Formal Learning*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/4054.

lios validating formal, non-formal and informal learning.

- Marketing measures are needed for creating visibility of services, particularly guidance provision that is new or not widely known by the target audience. People – whether young or old, in education or employment – are not always aware of the existing information and guidance services, nor how to access and make use of them. Accordingly, active promotion of both the traditional and online services that support citizens' educational and occupational decisions should be improved.
- Improved databases are needed to provide statistics on the target-groups and to support the monitoring and evaluation process for profiling and planning future services. Such databases potentially create the means for evidence-based learning and evidence-based policies, including those addressed to particular user-groups.
- The dissemination of information on interesting practices and knowledge within the field

of guidance, as well as analyses, surveys, and cross-sectoral (schools, VET, HE, social inclusion etc.) activities, are important for quality development, effective co-ordination between different types of guidance services, and continuing professional development.

- Continuing professional development is pivotal to respond to changing demands and to update skills and information on provision. Distance learning and e-learning using online tools are important methodologies in this respect. Moreover, providing resources for practitioners, users and parents by using on-line tools can be a valuable strategy for the future.
- All guidance provision and databases need to have a lifelong and life-wide perspective. More robust policy frameworks are needed to motivate and inspire individuals to take action at different ages and stages in their life course, always recognising that social and economic failures should not be attributed to the individual.

WP2

2.3 Work Package 3 (Co-operation and Co-ordination)

Participating countries: AT; CY; EL; ES; HR; IT; MT; NO; PL; TR; RO
Lead country: AT
Consultant: Professor Peter Plant

2.3.1 Activities

The focus of WP3 is on co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms in guidance practice and policy development. WP3 aims at providing opportunities for:

○ countries with existing fora or similar mechanisms to improve co-operation and co-operation in concrete areas of lifelong guidance, orientated to European policies as well as national priorities;

○ countries with emerging fora or similar mechanisms to compare, to improve and to implement effective mechanisms with the support of countries which have experience in adequate policies and processes;

○ countries without existing fora or similar mechanisms to find appropriate policies, processes and persons for a successful start and a sustainable strategy.

WP3 has conducted three study visits (Cyprus, May 2011; Norway, November 2011; Denmark, February 2012); and also a twinning/coaching event in early 2011 between Greece/Cyprus and Germany, based on sharing German experiences in forming a National Forum. The main focus of all these events has been on establishing and maintaining national and regional forums as appropriate mechanisms to enhance co-operation and co-ordination. The outcomes of discussions and presentations are available on the ELPGN website, along with the related briefing and reflection notes. A summary of current developments in member countries is provided in Annex 4 of this report.

2.3.2 Key conclusions

With a view to improve co-ordination, co-operation, and, indeed, coherence in policies and systems for lifelong guidance provision, most European countries face the challenge of fragmentation and sectorising. Various career guidance and career development services have their own history, aims, methods, and budgets: they tend to work in structural silos. Nonetheless, they are responsible for providing parts of guidance in a lifelong perspective, which ideally would imply a seamless and coherent lifelong guidance system. At present, this is a vision for the future, rather than a reality, in most countries.

National, regional or local forums can serve as vehicles for improving coherence and avoid overlaps in lifelong guidance systems. It seems fair to conclude that:

• National forums benefit from linking with and building on similar regional structures in a two-way process.

• Highly different conditions prevail in the various countries in terms of forming and maintaining national (and regional) guidance forums.

• Decisive factors include: centralisation/decentralisation; top-down/bottom-up approaches; level of professionalism; and policy interests.

• Some basic difficulties still exist in convincing different ministries with different portfolios to co-operate, let alone to co-ordinate their efforts in a cross-sectoral manner.

But such forums may have different ambitions in terms of the ambition of commitments. Thus, with a view to operationalise forums on a practical level, the intensity in terms of the levels of linkages has been defined at an earlier stage of WP3 as follows:

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

More specifically, with a particular focus on regional aspects of establishing coherence, such approaches may take several forms, all of which may facilitate co-operation and co-ordination across sectors, borders, and other dividing lines:

- *Intra-regional:* linkages within the region, across structural silos and different sectors.
- *Inter-regional:* linkages across regional boundaries.
- *Trans-regional*: linking several regions in thematic clusters.
- *Cross-national:* regional linkages across national boundaries.

A regional approach may be a fruitful way forward, in particular in countries with devolved and decentralised administrative structures, and may also serve to overcome difficulties in establishing or maintaining *national* forums: in such cases *regional* or even *local* forums may serve a number of lifelong guidance co-operation and co-ordination needs, without having a national umbrella under which to operate. Ideally, in most cases, a dualistic and holistic bottom-up *and* top-down approach will serve the purpose of linking national and regional/local guidance policies and priorities.

When developing co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms, a policy-making taxonomy may be helpful, distinguishing between:

- A *reactive* approach which mirrors and supports national/regional guidance policies.
- A *critical* approach which questions national/regional guidance policies.
- A *proactive* approach which formulates national/regional guidance policies.

These distinctions may help to create greater transparency regarding the expectations of the policy-making or policy-formulating roles of such forums. At present, most forums play a reactive or critical role to some degree, but few perform a truly proactive role in terms of formulating guidance policies, let alone actually implementing guidance policies.

2.3.3 Links to other WP themes

As the theme of WP3 by definition cuts across other WPs, links to other WPs are pivotal in relation to validation of prior learning, to access, to career management skills, to the integral use of ICT, and to the overall lifelong guidance policies of the EU. There is a need for and benefits from bi- and multilateral transnational exchanges within the common ELGPN development processes in general, including the development of instruments like those in the ELGPN Resource Kit. In practical terms, the implementation of the themes and activities of the other WPs is dependent on firm and systemic linkages which serve to facilitate co-operation and co-ordination in a seamless and coherent lifelong guidance system. More specific links to other WPs include:

- Easy *access* to a coherent guidance system builds on systemic co-operation and co-ordination (WP2).
- *Career management skills* development throughout life is greatly facilitated by co-operation and co-ordination across guidance sectors (WP1).
- *Quality* development in lifelong guidance is significantly enhanced by co-operation and co-ordination across guidance sectors (WP4).

WP3

2.3.4 Next steps

- Lifelong career guidance services need to co-operate and wherever possible to be co-ordinated in order to be efficient and effective. At present, too much energy is wasted on overlapping guidance activities which are carried out in institutional sectors with little cross-sectoral communication. This situation needs to be improved in terms of creating synergies between and among the different guidance actors and stakeholders, at national, regional, and local levels.

- Thus, co-operation and co-ordination in relation to guidance go beyond the breaking down of barriers between sectors. They aim at creating a seamless lifelong guidance approach, without losing the expertise of the different actors in the guidance process.

- In this process, innovative guidance projects need to find ways to a more sustainable footing in mainstream policies. Regional partnerships, linked to each other and to a national co-operation and co-ordination unit/council/forum in guidance, can be seen as important steps in this direction.

- With a view to supporting such developments, the future work of ELGPN needs to focus, in particular, on the issue of co-operation and co-ordination of lifelong career guidance services. This can be done through continuing mapping of the actual state of affairs in this field, linked to peer-learning, action-research-based activities which can facilitate mutual learning in clusters of countries with similar interests and at similar stages of development.

WP3

Section 2: Work Package reports

2.4 Work Package 4 (Quality Assurance and Evidence Base)

Participating countries: BE, DE, DK, EE, EL, HU, IE, IR, IS, LT, LU, NL, PT, SE, SI, UK
Lead country: HU
Consultant: Dr Deirdre Hughes

2.4.1 Activities

A key objective of the ELGPN is to develop operational tools to support concrete policy implementation. In 2011–12, WP4 activities involved reviewing quality-assurance systems and processes in member countries and examining their relationship to an earlier published Quality Assurance Framework[8]. From this, key topics for development activities included: new strategies for policy-makers and others to develop and apply new methods for data collection and to design and implement a Quality Assurance and Evidence-base (QAE) Framework (2011–12). The goals for 2011–12 were to:

- build upon the existing Quality Assurance (QA) framework and focus on refining, designing and developing a small set of indicators that are measurable and can be applied in EU and national policy contexts;
- design and develop the structure and content of a pilot project on learning outcomes measurement, covering at least five EU countries, with a number of selected service providers and users of career support services willing to participate, so that lessons can be learned and transferred to a wider audience;
- strengthen the evidence base for lifelong guidance through inputs to national surveys, where appropriate, and establish strong links to EU

and national policy, research and practice in relevant sectors;

- ensure linkages are made to relevant developments in other ELGPN Work Packages (and with appropriate outside agencies) in order to achieve greater coherence and synergy of ideas and outcomes;
- contribute to the ELGPN Resource Kit to be produced in 2012 and to upload relevant materials on to the ELGPN website;
- learn from each other by disseminating good and interesting policies and practices using the ELGPN website.

Four meetings were held:

- The theme of the first peer-learning event in Copenhagen, Denmark, involved a sub-group working on data-collection methods and the design of a small set of indicators that were measurable and could be applied in EU and national policy contexts. Parallel to this, a second sub-group developed a new 'pilot instrument' designed to capture learning outcomes from differing types of career support interventions.
- The theme of the fieldwork event in Tallinn, Estonia, involved presentations on key findings and presenting issues. From this, national and cross-sectoral policy issues were identified, including an assessment of the efficacy of existing approaches. Members agreed the implementation plan for piloting the two new policy tools, and learned more about national surveys and EU policy development activities designed to strengthen the evidence base for lifelong guidance in relevant sectors.
- The theme of the fieldwork visit in Luxembourg involved reviewing preliminary findings from the application of the first draft of the QAE Framework across member countries. A detailed synthesis report highlighted similarities and differences in current policies and

WP4

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[8] European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (2010). *Lifelong Guidance Policies: Work in Progress,* Annex 5. Jyväskylä: ELGPN.

practices, further refinements were made, and a revised and update version was agreed for further testing. The quality-assurance and evidence-base elements within the draft Glossary were reduced and made more succinct. Five member countries volunteered to translate and pilot the 'online' Careers Service Impact Inventory.

- The synthesis meeting held in Dublin reviewed policy developments in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Following a review of findings from the application of the revised draft of the QAE Framework, final revisions were made to the Framework; and preparations were undertaken for field-testing the Careers Service Impact Inventory (see Annex 6). The draft Resource Kit and Progress Report were reviewed and updated.

An outline of the development of the QAE Framework is provided in Annex 5.

2.4.2 Key conclusions

- The balance between quality assurance and evidence should be strongly influenced by a small number of agreed quality elements, criteria and indicators for measurement that can be tested and applied in practice, supported by examples of possible data, as highlighted in the QAE Framework.
- A specific focus is required on investments in workforce development and capacity building, to ensure that policy-makers, practitioners and managers have sufficient knowledge, skills and competence to gather evidence and construct appropriate data-sets that can both inform policy decisions and withstand public scrutiny.
- The EU and national set goals of learning mobility and employability must be supported through stronger evidence-based policies and practices. This should include strategies for the validation of 'formal' and 'informal' learning

and accreditation of careers practitioners. Close monitoring of careers practitioners' competence and capabilities is required to ensure that policies and practices keep up-to-date with the latest technologies, labour market trends, and new ways of working effectively with differing clients in differing contexts.

- There is an urgent imperative to improve knowledge and understanding of effective evidence-based policies, including quality-assurance systems and accountability frameworks. Investments made in lifelong guidance systems and services must demonstrate more clearly the added-value returns for individuals, communities and societies.
- The aims of quality-assurance systems and mechanisms are to improve efficiency in service provision, to increase institutional financial accountability and to create transparency from the perspective of the citizen. The latter is often neglected by both policy-makers and service providers.
- In many countries, quality-assurance frameworks have evolved which contribute to the gathering, analysis and presentation of data, helping to inform and develop lifelong guidance policies and practices. However, there is still a paucity of data relating to costs and benefits, broken down for analysis by specific target group(s) and/or by specific types of interventions. Lessons learned from EU policy-maker experiences and other allied sectors are crucial in developing more robust accountability data.
- With the exception of some Public Employment Services, few services if any have used data statistical modelling to analyse the immediate, medium and longer-term calculated savings to the public purse in the form of economic and/or social returns on investment.
- As fiscal arrangements tighten, there will be ever greater pressure from governments to justify expenditure on lifelong guidance services in relation to competing demands. So far, most

countries have focused on the quality of service provision and improvements, with practitioner competence and impact of their work positioned centrally within the current dialogue. The QAE Framework data provide concrete examples of countries applying this to policy development activities.

- Those responsible for lifelong guidance services should be informed and supported to demonstrate both economic and social returns on investment, not only in practitioners' work with clients, but also in the context of demonstrating impact to maintain and improve the range and quality of such services.

2.4.3 Links to other WP themes

- **WP1:**
  – Terminology used to define career management skills; the relevance of career management skills embedded within quality-assurance systems and processes for validation of formal and informal learning; the systematic collection of evidence on clients' personal, social and economic outcomes; the active involvement of citizens and users of lifelong guidance services; and the impact of online and offline services on individuals' career management skills.

- **WP2:**
  – Defining the actual size and shape of the careers sector workforce, linked to improving individuals' access to lifelong guidance services; the content of training for guidance practitioners; the process of embedding quality standards for guidance practitioners in validation processes; and the application of performance indicators to measure the quality of guidance and counselling in validation processes for informal/non-formal learning.

- **WP3:**
  – Influencing the intelligent application of the QAE Framework across all sectors.
  – Identifying opportunities to extend communication, collaboration and cross-fertilisation of good and interesting EU policies and practices on lifelong guidance service design and improvement; the development of a robust set of indicators applied across member countries which act both as evidence and as stimuli material for developing quality-assurance systems and reporting mechanisms; the impact of the economic downturn, resulting in new demands placed on policy-makers to produce reliable and robust data on impact and added-value returns on investments.

2.4.4 Next steps

- A stronger evidence base is required for reporting on the impact and added value of lifelong guidance services set alongside other competing priorities. Individuals tend to find their way in and out of learning and work through very differing support networks. As a result, lifelong guidance policies need to foster stronger partnerships between public, private and voluntary/community sectors to help improve self-reliance and social responsibility.
- National quality-assurance frameworks should have, as a minimum, five key domains: practitioner competence; citizen and user involvement; service provision and improvement; cost benefits to governments; and cost benefits to individuals.
- Greater attention must be given to cost analyses of differing types of lifelong guidance services and specific interventions. This requires continuous professional development activities that build specific knowledge and skill-sets in this regard.

WP4

- Improved usage of information and communications technology (ICT) and labour market intelligence and information (LMI) is essential to capture and analyse data within national and EU evidence-based policies and quality-assurance arrangements. At present, policies and systems tend to operate in 'silos'.
- A monitoring and evaluation system needs to be developed at an EU level, along the lines of the OECD PISA study.
- An annual reporting system is needed for member countries on lifelong guidance, to be added to existing reporting systems and procedures, and supported by a set of robust minimum requirements for data gathering.
- More coherent databases are needed to provide statistics on key target-groups and to support the monitoring and evaluation process. Such databases potentially create the means for evidence-based learning and evidence-based policies. They could also be effective tools for targeting particular user-groups.
- Closer co-operation at EU and national level is required on key lessons learned from specific sectoral areas that can support improved access to services, particularly for the most disadvantaged.
- The process of gathering evidence on individuals' informal and formal learning, linked to new validation processes including APEL arrangements, should be further exploited. Also, career management skills and career adaptability need to be given greater attention by policy-makers.

WP4

Section 3: EU Policy Developments[9]

3.1 Overview

Over the current decade 2010–20, the challenge is to show that Europe is able to create 'smart, sustainable and inclusive growth', in the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy. To this end, five EU headline targets are proposed. Three of these relate to the areas of education and training, employment and inclusion:

- 75% of the population aged 20–64 should be employed, including the greater participation of youth, older workers and low-skilled workers and the better integration of legal migrants.
- The share of early school-leavers should be under 10%, and at least 40% of the younger generation should have completed tertiary education.

- 20 million fewer people should be at risk of poverty by 2020.

To reach the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, a wide range of actions are required, through seven flagship initiatives. In four of these initiatives, education and training are considered as making a substantial contribution to the Strategy:

- *Youth on the Move* is designed 'to raise the overall quality of all levels of education and training in the EU'. With the aim to improve the employment situation of young people, this initiative calls for co-operation between universities, research and business, and for the modernisation agenda in higher education to include benchmarking university performance and educational outcomes in a global context. It urges the Commission and the member-states to promote the recognition of non-formal and informal learning.

- *Innovation Union* promotes excellence in education and skills development in order to ensure future growth from innovation in products, services and business models in a Europe faced with an ageing population. It urges member-states to ensure a sufficient supply of science, mathematics and engineering graduates.
- The *European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion* emphasises reducing early school-leaving.
- The A*genda for New Skills and Jobs* states that people should acquire the skills needed for further learning and the labour market through adult learning, as well as through general, vocational and higher education, to enable the current and future workforce to be adapted to the new economic conditions. This should be achieved through a strong impetus to the strategic framework for co-operation in education and training (ET 2020).

ET 2020, adopted in May 2009, constitutes the roadmap of Europe in the field of education and training until 2020. One of its four priorities is the quality and efficiency of education, which will be measured with supplementary benchmarks to be attained by 2020:

- At least 95% of children between the age of four and the age for starting compulsory primary education to participate in early childhood education.
- The share of 15-year-olds with insufficient abilities in reading, mathematics and science to be less than 15%.
- The number of mathematics, science and technology graduates to be increased by at least 15% over the 2000 level.
- By 2020, 20% of all university graduates to have undertaken learning mobility as part of their university education.

- The participation of adults in lifelong learning to be increased to an average of at least 15% by 2020 (against a 2010 benchmark of 12.5%).

The Communiqué *The Bologna Process 2020 – The European Higher Education Area in the New Decade*, adopted at a Conference in Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve on 28–29 April 2009, emphasises that 'student-centred learning requires empowering individual learners and effective support and guidance structures in higher education'.

The Bruges Communiqué (Communiqué of the European Ministers for Vocational Education and Training, the European Social Partners and the European Commission, meeting in Bruges on 7 December 2010) on *Enhanced European Co-operation in Vocational Education and Training for the Period 2011–20* calls for:

- 'Close co-operation' between Public Employment Services and education and training guidance systems, leading to more integrated guidance and counselling services.
- Career management skills development and a 'tasting approach', providing young people with an opportunity to become acquainted with different career possibilities.
- Accessible and targeted guidance services providing additional support at key transitions points, especially for learners at risk of underachievement.

Within the Employment Strategy, the four *Integrated Guidelines for Implementing the Europe 2020 Strategy* (GL 7, 8, 9, 10) ask the member-states:

- To implement flexicurity policies (which combine flexibility and security within an integrated approach) and 'to strengthen Public Employment Services with personalised services and active and preventive labour market measures at an early stage'. Such services and measures should be open to all, including young people,

those threatened by unemployment, and those furthest away from the labour market.

- To 'improve access to training, strengthen education and career guidance combined with systematic information on new job openings and opportunities'.
- To make efforts at promoting full participation in society and the economy and 'extending employment opportunities'.

These documents constitute the framework for action. From them, the following priorities can be identified:

- Reducing early school-leaving.
- Increasing learning mobility.
- Making VET more attractive.
- Modernising higher education.
- Promoting adult learning and validation of non-formal and informal learning.
- Combating youth unemployment.
- Implementing flexicurity policies.
- Fighting poverty and social exclusion.

A series of policy documents and actions, where guidance has a key role to play, have been issued or are in progress. These are set out in the following sections, to ground the ELGPN thematic activities in an EU policy context.

Policy

3.2 Schools

3.2.1 Key developments

Three themes are focused upon in this sector:

- Early school-leaving.
- Learning mobility.
- Early childhood education.

Early school-leaving

The Annual Gross Survey *Progress Report on Europe 2020 by the Commission* (12 January 2011, COM(2011) 11, Annex 1), in its analysis of the draft National Reform Plans, reveals that though all the draft plans have set national targets for the reduction of early school-leaving, it seems likely that Europe will fall short of the 10% target for 2020. The high level of youth unemployment (20%) is the most serious consequence: 52% of early school-leavers were unemployed in 2009.

A Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on *Tackling Early School Leaving: A Key Contribution to the Europe 2020 Agenda* (31 January 2011) analyses the consequences of early school-leaving and provides an overview of the existing and forthcoming EU-level measures to tackle it. The Communication emphasises that early school-leaving should be tackled by comprehensive policies. It considers early warning systems, guidance and vocational orientation for young people as key measures.

The Council Recommendation on *Policies to Reduce Early School Leaving* (7 June 2011) sets a common European framework for effective and efficient policies against early school-leaving. Two main actions are recommended to member-states:

- To launch an analysis at national, regional and local level of the conditions leading young

people to leave school, taking account of the type of education.
- To implement comprehensive national strategies against early school-leaving by 2012, in line with national targets. These strategies should comprise prevention, intervention and compensation.

The terms 'prevention', 'intervention' and 'compensation' are defined as follows:

- *Prevention* should be based on early schooling, flexibility of educational pathways, attractiveness of VET, and links between the education and employment sectors.
- *Intervention* includes developing early-warning systems for pupils at risk, networking with all the actors, empowering and professional development of teachers, and mentoring for individual pupils.
- *Compensation* policies could include second-chance education programmes and provision of various routes, including transition classes back into the mainstream education system.

The role of guidance is underlined to support students' career choices (intervention) and transitions (compensation).

The members of the European Council in a Statement on 30 January 2012 (*Towards Growth-Friendly Consolidation and Job-Friendly Growth*) urge member-states to make renewed efforts to get early school-leavers into training.

Learning mobility

A Green Paper on learning mobility for young people was published by the Commission in July 2009 in order to launch a public consultation. The Council Recommendation *Youth on the Move – Promoting the Learning Mobility of Young People* (28 June 2011) is based on its results. It refers to young people in all

learning and training contexts, at all levels, in all disciplines, and covers formal, informal and non-formal learning.

The main recommendations to the member-states are focused on information and guidance about opportunities for learning mobility, motivation, preparation with regard to foreign-language and intercultural skills, and administrative issues. Member-states are also asked to ensure the quality of learning mobility, including the provision of guidance to mobile learners, as well as recognition between member-states of learning outcomes acquired through mobility experiences. Particular attention should be paid to disadvantaged learners, by providing targeted information and support tailored to their specific needs.

Early childhood education

The Council conclusions on *Early Childhood Education and Care: Providing All Our Children with the Best Start for the World of Tomorrow* (2011/C 175/03) invites member-states to enhance the quality of early childhood education and care, which is essential for language acquisition, successful further lifelong learning, social integration, personal development and employability. It provides an opportunity for the early detection of learning difficulties and early intervention, and can help to identify young children with special educational needs and, wherever possible, facilitate their integration into mainstream schools.

The thematic study on *Teaching Reading in Europe: Contexts, Policies and Practices* produced by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) in July 2011 offers a comprehensive picture of reading literacy and identifies the key factors impacting on the acquisition of reading skills for 3–15-year-olds. It shows that although in 2009 one out of five 15-year-olds in EU had reading difficulties, there was often a lack of focus on the groups most at risk of such difficulties.

3.2.2 Involvement of ELGPN

Early school-leaving

ELGPN was alerted to the draft Recommendation on reducing early school-leaving. In the adopted Recommendation, the role of guidance is underlined as a key element of comprehensive strategies comprising a mix of policies, covering social policy and support services, employment, youth and integration policies. The three pillars of the framework (prevention, intervention, compensation) include provision for guidance and counselling 'to support students' career choices, transitions within education or from education to employment. It reduces poor decision-making based on false expectations or insufficient information. It helps young people to make choices which meet their ambitions, personal interests and talents' (intervention). ELGPN suggested that the third pillar, compensation, might include 'transition classes with a strong emphasis on guidance'.

Learning mobility

Although ELGPN has not been directly involved, the Council Recommendation on learning mobility of young people highlights guidance as the cornerstone to the success of learning mobility.

3.2.3 Next steps

Early school-leaving

Given its consequences in terms of youth unemployment, the issue of early school-leaving (ESL) is a particularly strong focus at European level. Accordingly, the future work of ELGPN should include:

- The role of career management skills (CMS) in preventing ESL: the identification of areas in CMS programmes that are more appropriate for students who are considered to be 'at risk'

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of early school-leaving, particularly in terms of motivation.

- Designing CMS curricula and relevant assessment processes in order to avoid a 'deficit perspective' for students at risk. Are portfolios relevant to this issue? How should they be constructed to be valuable for vulnerable groups of students? What steps can be taken to ensure the right to privacy and to avoid penalising use of the portfolio for vulnerable students?
- The role of Public Employment Services (PES) in preventing ESL for students at risk: how to organise partnerships between teachers and guidance practitioners within PES to present information about labour market opportunities and the structure of qualifications needed; the role of PES in relation to drop-outs ('compensation').
- Clarifying which institution should be responsible for school drop-outs who 'fall out of the system'.
- Access to on-line services for students at risk of ESL. What kind of support is needed, especially for young people who do not have the skills or tools to access web-based services? What steps can be taken to involve parents and provide them with the basic skills to access internet services so that they can help their children?
- The co-ordination of various guidance services and co-operation between all stakeholders including PES, social partners and social workers as a crucial factor for prevention, intervention and compensation of early school-leaving.
- Measuring the quality of guidance provision for students at risk of early school-leaving. This should be a priority, given the social consequences at stake, and the Europe 2020 target objective. The Recommendation asks for 'the development of evidence-based and cost-effective policies'. The evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of existing policy measures

aimed at reducing early school-leaving is an important basis for improving strategies.

Learning mobility

ELGPN work should include this topic in order to provide member countries with support for the implementation of the Council Recommendation *Youth on the Move – Promoting the Learning Mobility of Young People* (28 June 2011). This includes:

- 'Encourage the provision of guidance to mobile learners after their return on how to make use of the competences acquired during their stay abroad' (Council Recommendation, §6(g)).
- 'Make information easily accessible to all young people regarding learning mobility, for example through centralised web portals and other web services, support centres, information and counselling services. The use of internet-based services can also be helpful' (Council Recommendation, §1(b)).
- 'Support and enhance the visibility of contact points where individuals can obtain information on how their qualifications can be recognised and certified after their return from abroad' (Council Recommendation, §7(d)).
- 'Provide disadvantaged learners, who may be deprived of opportunities for learning mobility, with targeted information on available programmes and support tailored to their specific needs' (Council Recommendation, §8).
- 'Encourage networking between the relevant organisations, stakeholders and other actors, in order to ensure a co-ordinated approach to motivating young people' (Council Recommendation, §2(b)).
- 'Improve the quality of information and guidance on national, regional, and local mobility opportunities and grant availability' (Council Recommendation, §1(a)).

3.3 Vocational education and training (VET)

3.3.1 Key developments

In the light of the strategic objectives of the Bruges Communiqué, action has mainly been focused on:

- Attractiveness of VET.
- Learning mobility.
- Co-operation with the business sector.
- Developing a common language bridging the world of education/training and the world of work.
- Implementation of common EU tools.
- Modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive.
- Validation of informal/non-formal learning.

Attractiveness of VET

The results of a Eurobarometer survey on attitudes towards VET in the EU were published in September 2011. The survey covers issues related to quality of VET provision, teachers and trainers, labour market relevance, permeability, entrepreneurship, status of vocational professions, guidance, career choices, and factors and reasons for choosing VET, as well as outcomes of VET for individuals and society. Although VET had a positive image in some cases, linked to quality and strong employment prospects, 41% of respondents aged 15–24 stated that they would recommend general secondary or higher education as a preferable choice for young people, compared to 27% who would recommend vocational education and training. Less half of all respondents aged 25–39 and 40–54 agreed that young people receive enough career guidance.

The Commission will issue a staff working document on the role of vocational excellence for smart and sustainable growth in June/July 2012.

The publication of a policy handbook on work-based learning (WBL) is foreseen for 2014, identifying successful models of work-based learning.

Learning mobility

A benchmark for increasing learning mobility in initial vocational education and training (I-VET) was adopted by the Education Council on 28–29 November 2011. By 2020 an EU average of at least 6% of 18–34-year-olds with an initial VET qualification should have had a VET-related study or training period (including work placements) abroad, lasting a minimum of two weeks (or less if documented by Europass).

The Council conclusions on this benchmark note the contribution of learning mobility to enhancing the employability of young people through the acquisition of key skills and competences. In order to ensure quality in learning mobility, member-states are encouraged to use relevant tools, such as Europass and the ECVET and EQAVET systems.

Co-operation with the business sector

A dedicated Business-VET Forum is to be organised by the Commission every two years, as a platform for exchange between the VET sector, businesses and policy-makers on a range of topics related to excellence, attractiveness, relevance and partnership between VET and employers. The first Forum took place on 7–8 June 2012.

The Europe 2020 flagship initiative *Youth on the Move* proposes that a quality framework for traineeships should be developed by the Commission. This joint project between the Commission's Education (EAC) and Employment (EMPL) Directorates is planned for the second half of 2012.

A VET campaign on traineeships is being launched in 2012 to encourage enterprises to offer European traineeships.

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Developing a common language bridging the world of education/training and the world of work

The aim of the European Classification on Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) is to create a multi-lingual taxonomy to complement and link national taxonomies, in order to promote Europe-wide interoperability. The content of guidance will be extended from occupations to a more detailed picture of the underlying skills and competences.

Implementation of common European tools

The network on Quality Assurance in Lifelong Learning with a Focus on VET and Adult Education (QALLL) is contributing to EQAVET implementation and adult education action plans in which guidance has a role to play.

A report on the implementation of European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) in the member-states will be published by the Commission in 2013, and a conference on EQAVET projects will be organised.

In 2014 the Commission will produce a report on the implementation of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) in the member-states. A stocktaking conference will be organised.

Modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive

The Public Consultation on the Recognition of the Professional Qualifications Directive was aimed at gathering stakeholders' views on the modernisation of the Directive. Adopted in 2005 (2005/36/EC), the Directive sets the rules for mutual recognition of professional qualifications between member-states. Alongside a few innovations, it mainly consolidated and simplified 15 previous Directives, some dating back to the 1960s.

Under the possible future modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive, a project aims at facilitating the free movement of professionals in the EU through the launch of the European Professional Card. The card should simplify the administrative procedures for recognition, make it more transparent for citizens, and increase trust among the competent authorities of EU member-states.

In the framework of the Directive's modernisation process, there is a need to foresee guidance provision, including to employers, on how foreign qualifications can be 'translated' into national systems.

Validation of informal/non-formal learning

See Section 3.5 on adult learning.

3.3.2 Involvement of ELGPN

ELGPN has not been formally consulted on the documents outlined above.

The role of guidance is essential to make VET attractive to young people. The Eurobarometer results call for better information and counselling regarding VET pathways, and enhanced co-operation between lifelong guidance services and VET systems.

The ELGPN outcomes should feed into the Vademecum/Policy Handbook on Work-Based Learning (WBL), the quality framework for traineeship (EMPL and EAC), and the QALLL network mentioned above. All of these should include a guidance dimension.

3.3.3 Next steps

Lifelong guidance is essential to promote the attractiveness of VET, learning mobility (including the recognition of learning outcomes), and co-operation with the business sector.

The future work of ELGPN should take these themes into account and should include reflections on:

- The role of CMS in encouraging creativity and innovation.
- Delivery of CMS in VET settings.
- Better information and counselling regarding VET pathways.
- The role of guidance in transitions from VET to the world of work.
- Information and counselling related to mobility advantages and opportunities, including the recognition of the learning outcomes acquired

as a result of mobility, through the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and ECVET.

- Access to information and counselling regarding entrepreneurship, involving experts from businesses.
- Setting up structured co-operation mechanisms between lifelong guidance services, PES and the VET sector, including the social partners.
- Enhancing co-operation with the economic and business sectors.

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3.4. Higher education

3.4.1 Key developments

The main objectives in this sector are:

- Modernisation of higher education systems.
- Increasing learning mobility in higher education.

Modernisation of higher education systems

The Communication of 20 September 2011 from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on *Supporting Growth and Jobs – an Agenda for the Modernisation of Europe's Higher Education Systems* identifies the main areas for reform as being:

- to increase the number of higher education graduates;
- to improve the quality and relevance of teaching and researcher training, in order to equip graduates with the knowledge and core transferable competences they need to succeed in high-skill occupations;
- to strengthen the 'knowledge triangle' linking education, research and business;
- to create effective governance and funding mechanisms in support of excellence.

The Council conclusions on the modernisation of higher education (adopted at the Education Council on 28 November 2011) underline the crucial role of higher education to boost growth and economy through its link with research. Strengthening the 'knowledge triangle' between education, research and business is again viewed as a precondition for growth and jobs. Priority areas include:

- progressive pathways from VET to higher education and to develop recognition of prior learning and experience;
- better access for disadvantaged and under-represented groups by providing more transparent information on educational opportunities as well as better guidance in order to ensure the right choice of study;
- decreasing drop-outs rates, in particular by providing relevant post-entry support;
- use of graduate employment data (including tracking graduate employment outcomes) in course design, delivery and evaluation;
- tackling stereotypes still faced by women in reaching the highest levels in education and research;
- strengthening links between higher education institutions, employers and labour market institutions, in order to improve the match between skills and jobs;
- learning mobility.

On the Commission's side, the action will aim to ensure better labour market intelligence by improving data on higher education employment outcomes and by 'providing specific guidance on specific and transversal skills and overcoming skills mismatches'.

The Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué, adopted on 26–27 April 2012, seeks to develop the social dimension of higher education, including provision of adequate student support services (which implies guidance and counselling).

Increasing learning mobility in higher education

A benchmark for learning mobility was adopted by the Education Council on 28–29 November 2011. The Council conclusions note the contribution of learning mobility to enhancing the employability of young people.

The member-states are invited to improve data collection on learning mobility within all cycles of higher education, in close synergy with the Bologna process. In order to increase the learning mobility of higher education students, the target is that by 2020 an EU average of at least 20% of higher education graduates should have had a period of higher-education-related study or training (including work placements) abroad, representing a minimum of 15 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits or lasting a minimum of three months.

3.4.2 Involvement of ELGPN

ELGPN has not been involved in the discussion on the Council conclusions on the modernisation of higher education. There are few explicit references to guidance. However, the view of ELGPN is that lifelong guidance should be a key element of the modernisation agenda in higher education. The quality of information and of guidance services, particularly the provision of relevant post-entry support within higher education institutions, would help in decreasing higher education drop-out rates. The development of career management skills and access to adequate information by women in order to make them able to reach the highest levels in postgraduate education and research should help to tackle stereotyping and to dismantle the barriers still faced by women and consequently to liberate untapped talent. Guidance could also help to improve the match between skills and jobs.

3.4.3 Next steps

In line with the main elements of the modernisation agenda in higher education, specific issues to be deepened by ELGPN future work include:

- The role of lifelong guidance in the knowledge triangle (research, education, innovation).
- The continuity of CMS development between secondary education and higher education, and between VET and higher education.
- The inclusion of learning mobility in CMS.
- Specific information and counselling needed to improve access for disadvantaged and under-represented groups, and to prevent drop-outs in higher education.
- The inclusion of information and counselling in processes related to the recognition of prior experience within universities.
- The development of co-operation between guidance services of universities and the other stakeholders – in particular, enterprises, social partners and Public Employment Services – in order to respond more effectively to the needs of the economy and of the society.
- The development of a common culture of counselling within universities; the continuing improvement of practitioners' competences.
- The quality of information and counselling within guidance services in universities: evaluation system, databases, follow-up of students.
- Graduate employment data: how to train practitioners in their use.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of guidance services in increasing learning mobility.

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3.5 Adult learning

3.5.1 Key developments

Lifelong learning (LLL) was defined in the Commission's Communication on *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality* (2001) as encompassing the whole spectrum of formal, non-formal and informal learning. In the *Agenda for New Skills and Jobs*, particular attention is addressed to adult education.

Council Resolution

A Council Resolution on *A Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning* was adopted by the Ministers of Education at the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council on 28–29 November 2011. It provides a broad definition of adult learning as covering 'the entire range of formal, non-formal and informal learning activities – both general and vocational – undertaken by adults after leaving initial education and training'. Five priorities are proposed to the member-states:

- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality.
- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training.
- Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through adult learning.
- Enhancing the creativity and innovation of adults and their learning environments.
- Improving the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult learning sector.

The role of information and guidance is seen as making people (especially the low-skilled) aware and motivated to participate more in adult learning.

The other recommendations concern the role of employers and workplace-based learning, promoting flexible learning pathways including better access to higher education, informal and non-formal learning validation, quality assurance and professional development of adult education staff, better matches between educational provision and labour market needs, learning opportunities for older adults, promoting better use of ICT in adult learning, and facilitating the acquisition of transversal key competences such as learning to learn and a sense of initiative. All of these imply strong lifelong guidance support.

EU Skills Panorama

From 2012, an EU Skills Panorama will be produced to improve transparency for job-seekers, workers, companies and/or public institutions. The Panorama will be available online and will contain updated forecasting of skills supply and labour market needs up to 2020.

Validation of informal and non-formal learning

The validation of learning acquired through work and life experiences is a cornerstone of lifelong learning policies. Information, guidance and counselling are highlighted as a pivotal element in the *European Guidelines for Validating Non-Formal and Informal Learning* (p.53, §5).

In the consultation on the promotion and validation of non-formal and informal learning that the Commission launched in December 2010, the lack of information, support and guidance was identified among the main remaining problems to be tackled. Even in countries where more systematic procedures have been established, empowerment of individuals often remains low, due partly to ignorance and difficulties in using and understanding the procedures.

The current proposals for further action are:

- The introduction of an integrated Europass Skills Passport recording the full range of formal, non-formal and informal learning.
- A proposal for a draft Council Recommendation on the promotion and validation of non-formal and informal learning, in the framework of the Europe 2020 flagship initiative *Youth on the Move*. The proposed Council Recommen-

dation on this issue will call member-states to develop comprehensive and co-ordinated arrangements for validation by 2015, linked to the National Qualifications Framework, quality-assurance mechanisms, portability of validation outcomes, and guidance support.

3.5.2 Involvement of ELGPN

ELGPN has been consulted by the relevant Presidency about the Recommendation on *A Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning* and indicated some important points which it considered to be missing in the document:

- In the first priority, the Resolution focuses on guidance systems in order to increase the participation of adults in lifelong learning: it would be more relevant to underline the necessity of lifelong guidance, in line with the Resolution of 21 November 2008 on *Better Integrating Lifelong Guidance into Lifelong Learning Strategies*.
- Career management skills should be explicitly mentioned in the first priority: 'Promoting the development of career management skills for adults in order to help citizens to better manage their training pathway.'
- 'Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality' implies guidance throughout life.

3.5.3 Next steps

Further work should be focused on the role of guidance in adult education, following the two-fold approach of individual involvement and collective responsibility.

Career management skills (CMS) are a key factor in the *involvement of individuals*. Accordingly, ELGPN should:

- Promote the development of career management skills in adult learning at EU level (Working Group) and within national systems.

- Involve all stakeholders – e.g. policy-makers, training providers, social partners, employers – in this process.
- Encourage Public Employment Services to use new methodologies in order to make individuals more active in their own development: the requirements in terms of practitioners' competences and training are crucial in this respect.
- Propose content and methods of CMS training for adults, adapted to their needs, in particular in the workplace.
- Promote portfolios as an assessment tool for CMS, as a basis for EUROPASS and the transparency of qualifications, and thus as a tool for supporting worker mobility in Europe.

Access and quality constitute matters for *collective responsibility*:

- Outreach and learning opportunities are increasingly to be targeted at those with the lowest levels of qualifications.
- Evidence-based policy-making in the field of adult learning calls for comprehensive and comparable data on all key aspects of adult learning, for effective monitoring systems and co-operation between the different agencies, as well as for high-quality research activities.

Validation of informal/non-formal learning

The role of guidance in validation of informal/non-formal learning is recognised as a crucial key to success.

A clear distinction should be made between guidance related to validation/assessment issues and the general process of guidance. Thus a specific Reference Point could be devoted to guidance related to validation/assessment issues. The results of ELGPN work on these issues might be recorded in a Counselling Charter for Validation of Informal and Non-Formal Learning, annexed to the future EU Recommendation. This could include:

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- Relevance of portfolio development to validating informal/non-formal learning, allowing the individual candidate to contribute actively to the collection of evidence: links with the development of CMS; links with Europass and the future integrated Europass Skills Passport.
- Access to guidance and counselling for validation in the workplace: steps from information, through support for work-experience analysis, to counselling on further training pathways inside and outside the company; information to employers' and unions' representatives; funding aspects.
- The use of ICT-based systems for information exchange between candidates and counsellors.

- Balance between collective and individual information and counselling within the process of validation.
- Co-operation/co-ordination/networking between general guidance services and the validation providers; building a specific guidance and counselling platform at regional/local level.
- Competences/content of training for the counsellors; quality standards for counsellors in the validation process.
- Creation of indicators to measure the quality of guidance and counselling in the validation of informal/non-formal learning process.

3.6 Employment sector

3.6.1 Key developments

Young people are particularly affected by the current economic crisis and by the decrease in permanent jobs. Across the EU they face an unemployment rate of over 20%, which is twice as high as that of the overall population, and they are also over-represented among those on temporary contracts.

Fighting youth unemployment

The Council Resolution on the *Structured Dialogue with Young People on Youth Employment*, adopted on 26 May 2011, was the conclusion of the first cycle of the Structured Dialogue on Youth Employment (1 January 2010 to 30 June 2011). The Resolution identified the following priorities:

- Easier access for all young people to youth-friendly, high-quality information about the labour market.
- Career-oriented training and guidance.
- Recognition of youth work and non-formal learning.
- Equipping young people with skills and competences and easing their access to the labour market through tailored measures and a quality framework for internships.
- Improved flexibility as well as security.
- Equal access to mobility opportunities.

The Youth Opportunities Initiative, adopted by the Commission on 21 December 2011, calls on member-states to work on:

- preventing early school-leaving;
- helping youngsters to develop skills relevant to the labour market;
- ensuring work experience and on-the-job training;
- helping young people find a first good job.

The Commission is also urging member-states to make better use of the European Social Fund, which still has 30 billion of funding uncommitted to projects. In addition, the Commission has put forward a set of concrete actions to be financed directly by EU funds.

Each member-state will set out in its National Reform Programme (NRP) the concrete measures it will take to address these issues (National Job Plans); implementation will be subject to enhanced monitoring in the framework of the European semester (Statement, 31 January 2012).

Employment situation

The Annual Growth Survey (AGS) for 2012 takes stock of the employment situation and launches the 2012 European Semester of Economic Governance. The labour market reform for higher employment has been taken into account by member-states in their 2011 NRPs. Country-specific recommendations of the Commission were endorsed by the European Council in June 2011.

In addition, in March 2011, the member countries of the Euro area and six non-Euro-area member-states agreed on the Euro Plus Pact, which requires these countries to make voluntary commitments in the areas of competitiveness and employment, going beyond what has been agreed at EU level. Their national commitments are integrated in the NRPs and are assessed within the framework of the European Semester.

The Annual Growth Survey highlights lifelong learning policies as essential to equip people with the right skills for the labour market. By 2020, 35% of jobs will require higher qualifications, and the demand for low skills will drop by 12 million jobs.

The Communication on *Action for Stability, Growth and Jobs* adopted by the European Commission on 30 May 2012[10] proposed a number of elements to

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[10] http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/eccomm2012_en.pdf

form part of a growth initiative built on two mutually reinforcing pillars:

- An EU-level pillar drawing on the strength and synergies of working together at EU level.
- A Member-State-level pillar based on releasing the growth potential of structural reforms identified as part of the European Semester.

In the employment package, the Commission has proposed a set of concrete measures for a job-rich recovery across the EU. Co-operation between the Commission, the member-states, the social partners as well as public and private stakeholders will be needed to implement the specific actions proposed to tap into the potential of human capital and to implement the use of structural funds, in particular the European Social Fund, as proposed by the Commission for the next programming period.

Lifelong guidance policy development should be considered as a cornerstone of the actions.

3.6.2 Europe 2020 headline targets

On the *employment* target, the EU-27 employment rate for 2011 is likely to be only slightly above the 2010 level of 68.6% and to remain below its pre-crisis high of 70.3%.

On the *poverty reduction* target, the EU target of getting at least 20 million people out of poverty and social exclusion by 2020 will not be reached, based on current national targets.

Complementary flagship initiative actions

Agenda for New Skills and Jobs. Currently, there are 23 million unemployed people in the EU, corresponding to 10% of the working-age population. Skills mismatches and shortages are still hindering economic recovery.

Thirteen key measures are being launched. In particular:

- An EU Skills Panorama will be produced from 2012, to improve transparency for job-seekers, workers, companies and/or public institutions (see Section 3.5).
- The development of the European Skills Passport is expected in 2012.

Youth on the Move. Some key actions have already been launched to fight youth unemployment, such as:

- Youth@work, an awareness-raising campaign to build contacts between young people and small businesses (SMEs).
- The European Vacancy Monitor, which gathers up-to-date information on job vacancies.

The European framework for youth employment is built upon four pillars:

- Help to get a first job and start a career.
- Support for youth at risk.
- Providing adequate social safety nets for young people.
- Supporting young entrepreneurs and self-employment.

Within this framework, the Commission has proposed specific areas for action in member-states, including Youth Guarantees to ensure that all young people are in jobs, further education or activation measures within four months of leaving full-time education. In addition, the Commission will present, before the end of 2012, further actions to support transition into the labour market, to provide more traineeships and to encourage mobility.

Renewing the flexicurity agenda

General measures to address the balance between security and flexibility have been taken in a number of member-states. But the crisis is changing the approach of flexicurity and many issues are emerging.

3.6.3 Involvement of ELGPN

ELGPN has commissioned a concept paper on flexicurity[11] which provides definitions of the concept, explains its attractiveness and identifies some of the issues it raises, including suspicions of the emphasis on employability security rather than employment security. The paper provides, in particular, an analysis of the implications of flexicurity for career guidance.

ELGPN has also produced a concept paper on youth unemployment and lifelong guidance[12]. The paper examines the trends in youth unemployment, current policies and practices within the EU in response to it, and how lifelong guidance can make a positive contribution to new and emerging government delivery plans within and across member-states.

Two meetings between ELGPN and DG EMPL representatives took place in Brussels in October and November 2011. Potential areas of co-operation were discussed.

3.6.4 Next steps

Further work should examine the added value of lifelong guidance in employment strategies, particularly in flexicurity policies and for combating youth unemployment.

Concerning the Employment Guidelines, ELGPN proposed in 2010 that lifelong guidance should be explicitly integrated as a guideline in its own right. Since this is not currently the case, ELGPN might suggest that, in the methodological recommendations that the Commission addresses to the member-states when launching the NRPs process, lifelong guidance activities might be focused within guideline 7 in particular.

Concerning flexicurity policies, other 'complements' might be added to the existing ones. In particular, it would be relevant to add lifelong guidance and more precisely CMS development and tailored access to counselling:

- Role of CMS and portfolios in flexicurity.
- Role of information, advice and guidance for lifelong learning, as part of the contractual obligations of flexicurity in securing pathways.
- CMS development for adults in the workplace for career planning through self-exploration as well as exploration of work activities and training: the role of training providers, the training of staff, and the roles of employers and of trade unions.

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[11] Sultana, R. (2011). *Flexicurity: Implications for Lifelong Career Guidance.* Concept Note commissioned by ELGPN.

[12] Hughes, D. & Borbély-Pecze, T.B. (2012). *Youth Unemployment: a Crisis in Our Midst – the Role of Lifelong Guidance Policies in Addressing Labour Supply and Demand.* Concept Note commissioned by ELGPN.

3.7   Social inclusion

3.7.1   Key developments

In 2008, more than 80 million people across the EU lived below the poverty line. Over 20 million children are at risk of poverty in Europe. This situation has been worsened by the economic crisis.

Combating social exclusion, and promoting social justice and fundamental rights, are core objectives of the European Union.

The EC Communication in 2008 on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market promoted the concept of 'active inclusion', in particular for unemployed people, contending that those most excluded from work need more personalised pathways to employment.

A set of *common principles*[13] have been agreed to help people to gain access to the labour market. The principles address the need for integrated strategies combining well-designed income support schemes, inclusive labour markets and adequate social services.

European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion

In 2010, the Europe 2020 Strategy proposed to establish a European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion (a European framework for social and territorial cohesion), as one of its seven flagship initiatives for action to serve that goal. The Platform aims at creating a joint commitment among the member-states, EU institutions and key stakeholders to fight poverty and social exclusion.

The Platform sets a dynamic framework for action. The fight against poverty and exclusion needs to rely on growth and employment as well as on modern and effective social protection that must be combined with a broad set of social policies including targeted education and training.

European Social Fund

Among the EU's financial instruments, the European Social Fund (ESF) is the key financial tool for supporting employment and social inclusion.

The ESF will be adjusted to the new framework of Europe 2020 to fully play its role in ensuring the right skills for jobs and in reducing poverty.

The proposal for the Regulation was adopted by the European Commission on 6 October 2011, following a series of consultations. ESF will support the achievement of the headline targets of Europe 2020 and the policies to be implemented by the member-states under the Employment Guidelines. It should also contribute to the implementation of the flagship initiatives. The draft ESF Regulation for 2014-20 proposes to target the ESF on four 'thematic objectives':

- promoting employment and labour mobility;
- investing in education, skills and lifelong learning;
- promoting social inclusion;
- combating poverty.

This proposal is being discussed by the Council and the European Parliament, with a view to adoption by the end of 2012, to allow for the start of a new generation of cohesion policy programmes in 2014.

Negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework for the whole EU budget will continue in parallel. The Commission has already proposed to allocate   336 billion for cohesion policy instruments in 2014–20.

3.7.2   Involvement of ELGPN

ELGPN has not been involved in the the design of social inclusion policies. But the concept of active inclusion necessarily includes provision of lifelong

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[13]   Commission Recommendation on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market (2008/867/EC), including common principles endorsed by the Council to combat poverty more effectively (17 December 2008).

guidance and implies the development of career management skills.

On the ESF draft Regulation, the ELGPN has not been formally consulted. Yet the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the supporting Flagship initiatives reinforce and extend the transversal role of lifelong guidance between the key EU sectoral policy areas and the need for a more comprehensive strategy for lifelong guidance policy development in the EU and the member-states. Lifelong guidance is transversal to the four ESF priorities and might be included in each thematic objective.

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Section 4: Evaluation[14]

4.1 Evaluation strategy

The Warsaw Plenary Meeting on 13–14 September 2011 endorsed the Operational Evaluation Plan for the ELGPN 2011–12 Work Programme. According to the plan, the functioning and activities of ELGPN were to be evaluated to ensure the effectiveness of processes and tasks and to support the continuous development of the Network. This section summarises the findings of the ELGPN summative evaluation for 2011–12. A more detailed presentation and analysis of the data is available in the ELGPN Evaluation Report on the ELGPN website.

The endorsed evaluation strategy adopted a community-based evaluation approach, which aims at encouraging active participation in the evaluation process from all involved communities and stakeholders. According to the plan, both quantitative and qualitative methods were utilised. The evaluation was conducted at three levels:

- *Process evaluation*, assessing the processes and tasks of the Work Programme. This aspect of the evaluation reviewed the performance of the Work Packages and related processes to ensure successful project management and operations.
- *Outcome evaluation*, assessing the outcomes of the Work Programme, in particular its products, in terms of their relevance, usability and completeness.
- *Mutual learning/impact evaluation*, assessing the learning outcomes and impact of the Work Programme.

The summative evaluation was conducted as an online survey in May 2012. The questionnaire was sent to all ELGPN member and observer countries as well as its partner organisations. Responses were received from 28 of the 29 member countries, from one of the two observer countries, and from one

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14   This section has been prepared by Dr Raimo Vuorinen, Co-ordinator of ELGPN, and Ms Outi Ruusuvirta, ELGPN Co-ordination Unit.

partner organisation. The high response rate from member countries (96.5%) can be interpreted as a indication of members' commitment to the Network and its development.

4.2   Management of the network

The ELGPN Co-ordination Unit based at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, has been responsible for the day-to-day management of the Network. According to the summative evaluation survey, the ELGPN members appeared in general to be satisfied with the leadership and administration of the Network. Respondents were also very content with the way the Co-ordinator dealt with problems and difficulties. However, it was suggested that the management of procedures and deadlines, and the financial management arrangements, could be improved.

One of the main aims of ELGPN is to facilitate mutual learning and exchange of good practice between the member countries. ELGPN members were in general satisfied with their participation opportunities in the Work Programme: 90% of the respondents fully agreed or agreed with a statement to that effect. They also valued the contributions from the ELGPN consultants, their peers in other countries and the partner organisations. The Plenary Meetings were viewed as important forums for cross-national communication between the members and for reflection on the Network outputs and future directions. Substantial work also took place within the thematic activities and at country level. Nevertheless, it was indicated that the Network would benefit from a continuous development of its working methods. It was noted, for instance, that the workload regarding data collection and reporting was too demanding, in the light of the available resources.

4.3   Learning outcomes from the thematic activities

Overall, the members of the four Work Packages (WPs) reported that they were content with the work carried out in these thematic groups. A large majority of country teams agreed that the outcomes achieved in their respective Work Packages were of high quality; all but one agreed that these outcomes had met their expectations at least to some extent. The members reported that the thematic activities and field visits had given them opportunities to learn about lifelong guidance systems and different options for organising the services. They had become more aware of the challenges and factors which influence lifelong guidance policy development and successful implementation of national initiatives. Members also felt that interaction in the thematic groups had given them an opportunity to review their national lifelong guidance systems, as well as to explore what worked and why in particular contexts. The field visits had helped them to reflect on the relative progress of their country in developing a national lifelong guidance system and on the level of engagement of national stakeholders in this process. During some field visits, practical examples of career guidance structures were enhanced by making connections to theoretical contributions. The contributions of contracted external consultants had helped to develop a coherent synthesis of the themes and to explore the interface with the sectoral policy areas. For the field-visit host countries, organising the visit and presenting their national guidance system had proved to be a valuable learning experience.

More specifically:

- WP1 members reported that they had learned about the complexity of the career management skills (CMS) development process and had become more aware of the challenges in implementing CMS nationally. The implementation of CMS in national curricula, and the role of CMS in higher education as well as

in the validation of non-formal and informal learning, were perceived as important learning experiences.

- WP2 members particularly identified the use of information and communication technologies in widening access as a valuable learning experience. The field visits had also given members opportunities to share experiences on different options for integrating guidance into processes for validation of prior learning.

- WP3 implemented a twinning activity on co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms with Germany and Greece, also involving Cyprus: an example of sharing experiences between countries at different stages in developing a national lifelong guidance forum. Countries in the process of developing national co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms indicated that they were able to compare the different practices in ELGPN member countries and to reflect on the processes underlying these mechanisms. On the other hand, some countries which already had national forums, or wanted to develop other type of representative structures, felt that the working method and content of WP3 had been somewhat repetitive.

- In WP4, differences between countries in their approaches to quality assurance and evidence-based policy making were the focus for mutual learning. Participants reported that it had proved difficult to develop a list of quality indicators which could be used in its entirety in all member countries. However, the development of common indicators, alongside the comparison of different national surveys and the development of a pilot programme for evaluating the learning outcomes of guidance, were perceived to have been an important stimulus for deepening understanding of the quality aspects of national guidance systems. Participating countries had been provided with opportunities to discuss the quality indicators that were currently applied or could be applied

at national level to support further investment in guidance services. They emphasised the relationship between the challenges in quality assurance and the distinctive context of the national lifelong guidance system.

4.4 Relevance of the ELGPN 2012 outputs

Overall, it appears that ELGPN member countries were satisfied with the Network and the general outcomes of its work. All respondents agreed that the ELGPN outcomes had met their expectations at least to some extent; 87% fully agreed or agreed that the outcomes achieved within the Work Programme were of a high quality; 77% fully agreed or agreed that the outcomes were relevant to their national context; and all agreed that they could use the outcomes in their national context at least to some extent.

ELGPN members regarded the briefing and reflection notes prepared by external consultants as very relevant and helpful in preparing for the field visits and supporting the implementation and evolution of the Work Programme. The reflection notes opened wider perspectives on the themes and complemented the discussions during the meetings. The targeted analyses and comprehensive accounts of the themes discussed were seen to be of high quality.

Many members found the ELGPN policy briefings helpful in enabling them to follow guidance-related developments in the sectoral policy areas. The briefings were perceived also to be valuable in reminding the thematic activities of common objectives and achievements. The briefings gave all ELGPN members and national stakeholders an opportunity to learn quickly about relevant guidance-related policy developments. Some members translated the briefings into their national languages. However, some countries with a national co-ordination unit for EU affairs did not see the briefings to be so relevant.

The main output of the Work Programme, the Resource Kit, was perceived to summarise the het-

erogeneous issues identified in the implementation of the Work Programme and to integrate them into a coherent package. The Resource Kit reflected the main themes of the Work Programme and presented useful steps for developing a national lifelong guidance system. Members saw it as a relevant updating of the 2004 EU common reference tools for lifelong guidance, taking into account the new Europe 2020 priorities. The kit illustrated the contextual differences between the countries, which were implicitly integrated in its tools. However, some members indicated that the Resource Kit was too general in nature, offering limited practical solutions to the problems policy-makers were facing on a daily basis. Other members felt that this was still work in progress, representing an important first step towards preparing a more elaborate tool for policy-makers and other stakeholders to review existing lifelong guidance provision in countries and regions.

It should be noted that the strong element of collective participation in the production of the Resource Kit involved some compromises in terms of technical quality and consistency. The Network consists of a heterogeneous group of national representatives with varying roles and professional backgrounds. This provides a rich range of professional and policy perspectives, but these may not always be applied evenly. For example, the selection of the national case studies were based on the proposals of the Work Packages rather than on consistent and agreed quality criteria. As a whole, the Resource Kit represents a tangible product for use at national and regional levels in member countries, but may need improvement following field testing during the 2013–14 Work Programme.

In the process of preparing the Resource Kit, the Work Packages developed other complementary tools to support its implementation. These are reported in Annexes 5-8 of this report. WP1 collected data from member countries to develop Guidelines for Career Management Skills Development, as well as a description of success factors in the implementation of lifelong guidance policies: these outputs are intended for use in developing and implementing career development programmes in the education system and public employment services. WP4 produced a detailed proposal for a Quality-Assurance and Evidence-base (QAE) Framework, plus a Careers Service Impact Inventory to examine the impact of career services at institutional level: these tools can be used as a basis for developing national benchmarks on lifelong guidance.

The members indicated a number of ways in which they planned to use the Resource Kit. Some countries will translate the tools into their national language. In some, the tools will be used by national forums or working groups comprising policy-makers and national experts. The various sections of the kit allow countries if they wish to choose particular fields of work without necessarily dealing with the whole national guidance system at once. Other members indicated that the Resource Kit will be used in reviewing national lifelong guidance strategies, in national educational reforms, in defining priorities for national ESF projects, and in developing training programmes for guidance practitioners.

4.5 Impact at national level

During its two first phases, ELGPN facilitated sharing of good practices and mutual learning between European countries. One of the goals during the 2011-12 Work Programme was to strengthen impact at national level.

The participating countries designate their representatives in the network. The working assumption is that each national delegation will include both governmental and non-governmental representatives. One of the goals in 2011–12 was to strengthen the national representation. As in the previous phases of ELGPN, the member countries adopted different strategies for involving relevant ministries. Of the 29 country delegations, 27 included a representative of the education ministry; 15 included representation from the ministry of labour/employment. The

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number of NGO representatives (30 delegates from 15 countries) represented an increase from 2010 (17 delegates from 12 countries) (for details, see Annex 1). ELGPN members were aware that in some cases the national team involved in the Network did not have the relevant mandate necessary to influence national policy systems. Some members indicated that their country's membership of ELGPN has influenced the level of knowledge, changed attitudes and developed new possible solutions, rather than directly shaping the development of policies. In some cases, due to national workloads, changes in staff or cuts in national budgets, the designated national ELGPN representatives had limited resources for contributing to the thematic activities and for disseminating the outcomes at national level.

Most members reported that during the 2011–12 Work Programme they had more interaction with national policy development and practice than during the previous two ELGPN phases (2007-10). The ELGPN representatives contributed to many national policy seminars (AT, BG, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR, HR, IE, IS, IT, LT, MT, NL, NO, PL, SE, PL, PT, SI) and to national events in conjunction with ELGPN Plenary Meetings or field visits (HU, MT). These events provided opportunities for policy-makers to be updated on international developments, as well as allowing the host countries to showcase their national policies. ELGPN national delegations also organised working-group meetings to support their national contributions to the Resource Kit. In addition, the ELGPN materials were translated into national languages to inform national stakeholders on the progress of the thematic activities.

ELGPN also impacted on communication and co-operation between different ministries and other organisations in its member countries. Examples included raising important questions and challenges, and proposing specific steps that policy-makers ought to consider, such as the role government should play in shaping the characteristics and qualifications of guidance practitioners (EL). In Poland, the involvement of national delegations in ELGPN

activities resulted in developing measures which made co-operation at central level more efficient. In the UK, ELGPN issues were considered as part of regular UK Governments careers policy forum meetings. In some countries, the 2011-12 activities have reinforced existing co-operation between ministries (CZ), and have expanded communication with the academic community (PT). Co-operation between ministries has been operationalised in national forums, in the development of national frameworks (SI) or in jointly organised projects (DE). The ELGPN has also strengthened the role of Euroguidance centres in implementing national activities (IT). But in some countries where the composition of national delegations changed, communication with key stakeholders had to start again from the beginning.

The members provided a number of concrete examples where the Network had acted as a catalyst for national policy development, or where ELGPN products had been used in the national context. The WP1 outcomes were used as a concrete set of guidelines for guidance interventions in developing a national CMS framework (PT) or supported the development of CMS programmes as part of national curriculum development (LU). Countries added CMS programmes as a new curriculum subject (ES, HU) or included CMS development in their national lifelong guidance strategies (FI), national lifelong guidance quality standards (HR) or preparation of national legislation on education (LV). The WP1 products were also used in developing the competences of professionals and teachers responsible for the promotion of CMS (HR).

The mutual learning during the ELGPN thematic activities inspired policies for widening access, especially through the development of national online guidance services (DE, DK, FR, HR, HU, IS, LV, PL, PT), of national services within educational settings (PL, SI) or of non-stop guidance centres (NL).

ELGPN impact on the development of national co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms was particularly significant during the previous phases of ELGPN. By the end of 2010, most member countries

had established or were in the process of establishing national guidance forums or other co-operation mechanisms. During the 2011–12 Work Programme, a national forum or a cross-ministerial working group was established in Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, Malta and Sweden. In Norway, the work of ELGPN fed directly into the establishment of a new National Unit for Lifelong Guidance which focuses on co-ordination of guidance in different sectors, widening access and developing the evidence base and quality development for the services. As noted earlier, Germany and Greece, with Cyprus, organised a twinning programme to promote the national development of a co-ordination mechanism in Greece and Cyprus. In the Czech Republic, the ELGPN influence was particularly visible on enhanced co-operation at regional level. The challenge for future work is to support the continuing evolution of existing co-operation and co-operation mechanisms (for a brief review of the current state of such mechanisms, see Annex 4).

Participation in WP4 has been a significant stimulus to the development of national quality-assurance systems in lifelong guidance in many member countries. The development of commonly agreed quality criteria or standards at national level has been a parallel process with ELGPN in Germany and Lithuania. Croatia and Denmark have been expanding quality criteria across sectors. Hungary, Ireland, Norway and Portugal have national initiatives to enhance the current feedback mechanisms and create a more consistent evidence base for lifelong guidance policy development. In general, the WP4 products were welcomed by members as a major tool to support national development and as a strong basis for future ELGPN programmes. The quality-assurance framework can help to evaluate national guidance systems and to identify issues requiring attention and gaps that need to be filled. To achieve these goals, the tools need to be translated into national languages and promoted among relevant stakeholders.

A summary of the perceived added value of ELGPN to each member country is provided in Annex 10.

4.6 ELGPN as a member-state-driven network

During the first two phases the added value of the Network has been related to the fact that EU member-states face broadly similar challenges and problems. The establishment of the ELGPN was an initiative by the EU member-states through the Open Method of Co-ordination. It has been a mechanism to promote structured co-operation between its member countries and parallel international collaborative projects with mutual interests.

One of the goals of the 2011–12 Work Programme was to gain stronger political influence for the Network on EU policy processes. In 2011–12 ELGPN was invited to contribute to the implementation of the Europe 2020 flagship initiatives in relevant networks and to EC-led thematic working groups. However, despite its acknowledged role in the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007–13, the ELGPN does not have an explicit channel for direct interventions in policy development. Consultation on key policy documents has often been informal: for example, through members' contacts with bodies which have a national mandate in the key policy processes (e.g. educational committees or employment committees). The current mandate is not clear and there are different expectations of the role of ELGPN in this respect among the Network members.

The ELGPN Work Programme is endorsed by the Plenary Meeting before submission to the European Commission and is designed to cover the activities for the two-year contractual period. In practice, during the implementation of the Work Programme, needs have emerged among the Network members that have required immediate reactions to EU guidance-related policy developments. These efforts to co-construct policy directions across Europe have produced some potential tensions among the Network Members. One of the challenges relates to the different ways in which different languages conceptualise lifelong guidance and related terminology.

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The national definitions of different activities reflect the different cultures, institutional contexts, delivery modes and competence profiles of career practitioners. Since the participating countries are at different stages of policy development and have distinctive issues to address, it is at times difficult to agree proposals that meet the needs of all ELGPN members. Sometimes the tensions between government departments or the level of decentralisation place restrictions upon the effective implementation of coherent national lifelong guidance policies. In addition to the EU level of guidance policy development, there is emerging interest in some countries to develop cross-border clusters with similar interests.

The inputs from ELGPN member countries to the Network activities vary. The contributions of each country to the 2011–12 activities are presented in Annex 2. The levels of acceptance of ELGPN at national level and the levels of involvement in ELGPN activities are linked to the composition of the national delegation and the workloads of national representatives, as well as the current phase of national developments. Where the composition of the national team changes, this can limit opportunities to contribute effectively to Network activities, especially where no briefing takes place as part of a managed handover.

Some countries indicate that, because they are at a relatively early stage in developing national guidance systems, they feel they have learned more in ELGPN than they have felt able to contribute. However, some of the issues they have raised have helped to shape the discussions of the ELGPN in fruitful ways. Such countries tend to want ELGPN to have a stronger policy role than do countries with a longer history of guidance policy development. They would like more support from ELGPN for their national initiatives. For other countries, this kind of active role, e.g. defining minimum levels for quality standards, might be viewed as challenging their autonomy in national lifelong guidance policy development.

4.7 Conclusions

The key strength of ELGPN continues to be the strong ownership of its activities expressed by the national delegations. It has built its infrastructure and has identified targets for lifelong guidance policy development. The third phase of its life (2011–12) has been devoted to the development of concrete tools to help EU member-states and other participating countries to promote better-informed and more effective policies related to lifelong guidance. According to the members' evaluation responses, these goals have been largely met.

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Section 5: Vision for the future[15]

The wider paradigm of lifelong guidance is both an integrated entity and part of a broader social context. Lifelong guidance can be examined as a policy, as an activity of individual organisations or networked services (sometimes in collaborative contracts between the public administration and the private and voluntary sectors), as well as an individual process. Lifelong guidance provision is directed by official documents such as laws, decrees and plans, as well as unofficial traditions. As citizens progress in their life or career, they may look for services from several professional groups or service providers. There is accordingly a need to develop consistent networked lifelong guidance services to guarantee access and social equity in accordance with local cultural, economic and social contexts.

Lifelong guidance is inherently 'transversal', in the sense that it crosses different sectors, in two main respects. Lifelong guidance provision is distributed across educational, labour market, social and health provision, under different ministries and other jurisdictions (schools, tertiary education, public employment services, social partners, the voluntary sector, the private sector). In addition, one of the key roles of such services is to help individuals to move effectively across sectors in the course of their personal and career development. Effective policies for lifelong guidance therefore need to involve a number of different authorities and stakeholders. A national lifelong guidance forum or other similar representative structure is a mechanism for bringing these bodies together, in order to produce more effective policy development and more harmonised and consistent service provision. It can also address the integrative potential of ICT for developing a coherent lifelong guidance system.

As a member-state-driven network, the ELGPN represents a major development in support of national lifelong guidance policy development in Europe and an innovative form of the Open Method of Co-ordination within the European Union (EU),

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which could be applicable in other areas too. As a network it has to examine the processes, dynamics and tensions that arise in the effort to co-construct policy directions in and across Europe. At the member-country level these can relate to definitions of lifelong guidance activities, the mixture of representation across the relevant ministries, the sustainability of the national teams and their mandates in relation to policy-making. The complexities of policy learning and policy transfer vary in relation to the level of centralisation or de-centralisation of their national policies. Depending on their current situation, some countries are more active than others in policy development. In some parts of the EU, there are also tendencies towards regional groupings.

The tensions between the participating countries can relate to, for example: diversity vs. 'shepherding' into a policy direction; redefining access in relation to markets for guidance; cost-effectiveness vs. unintentional social injustice; or the identification of performance indicators in lifelong guidance. From a wider perspective there could also be a tension relating to whether the network is policy-driven or evidence-driven. This requires attention to the links between research and policy. A challenge for ELGPN is to analyse its role in policy development, especially the interaction between EU member-states, and between member-states and the European Commission, in the context of a member-state-led European policy network supported by the European Union.

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

In developing the 2013–14 ELGPN Work Programme, the working structure of the Network should be modified according to the new needs of the Europe 2020 master strategy and its seven flagship initiatives. ELGPN as a network must foster the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy in the EU as well as in the member-states. Of the five Europe 2020 'headline indicators', three (1, 4, 5) are potentially linked directly to the further development of European lifelong guidance systems and policies, and are only reachable if lifelong guidance is examined as a cross-cutting element between the current governmental sectors of the EU administration as well as the member-states' governmental structures. Lifelong guidance requires actions in multiple fields and should be integrated in key EU funding programmes and be addressed in all relevant political dialogues.

The first six years of ELGPN (2007–12) have created active collaboration between relevant governmental and non-governmental bodies across its member countries and other relevant networks, as well as with the relevant units of DG EAC and DG EMPL. The ELGPN Work Programme 2011–12 has developed a Resource Kit which can be used in Network member countries in support of the development and implementation of European lifelong guidance systems and policies and of related economic, social and political goals. Based on prior ELGPN experience, the further work will concentrate on three main activities:

- dissemination and application of the Resource Kit in each member country, with support from clusters of other countries (Policy Review Clusters);
- work of output-oriented Thematic Task Groups (TTGs);
- review and further development of the Resource Kit, possibly to inform the development of a European Framework for Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems Development.

Based on the ELGPN outcomes and main action fields of the Europe 2020 Strategy and flagship initia-

tives, the following possible tasks are suggested for the output-oriented TTGs:

- To produce a series of analytical policy briefings on European education & training and employment policy developments from a lifelong guidance perspective (continuation of the similar work carried out in the 2011–12 Work Programme).
- To develop a handbook for policy-makers which would pull together the key existing evidence on the impact of career development services, and provide a guide to the possible elements of accountability frameworks (with examples), in collaboration with ICCDPP and other relevant research networks outside Europe (see below).
- To explore the possibility of developing a *European Framework for Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems Development* incorporating possible indicators, to develop the technical basis for such a framework, and to establish an appropriate ELGPN process using the Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC) model.

Other TTGs might produce commissioned papers on selected topics. Examples include:

- social inclusion, poverty reduction and the role of lifelong guidance services;
- active solidarity/ active ageing and role of lifelong guidance policies;
- new EU mobility tools (e.g. EQF, ECVET, ECTS, ESCO, EUROPASS) and the role of lifelong guidance in linking users with these tools;
- the role of lifelong guidance in policies on early school-leaving (prevention, intervention, compensation);
- funding (how lifelong guidance is financed, and by whom);
- language and concepts (conceptualisation of key terms related to lifelong guidance in different European languages, and how this reflects

different ways of viewing the concept of lifelong guidance and the policies, structures and services required to operationalise it; to be linked to a multi-lingual thesaurus to sit alongside a further revised version of the ELGPN Glossary).

In order to maintain the quality of the Network products, each of these groups will need technical support from external consultants.

The International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy (Budapest, 5–7 December 2011) invited the ELGPN to strengthen links between European Union member-states and parallel international initiatives in lifelong guidance policy development. As recommended by the Symposium, the TTG on impact evidence (see above) could develop a handbook for policy-makers, in collaboration with ICCDPP and other relevant international partners and research networks extending beyond Europe. ELGPN could also encourage OECD and/or Cedefop to repeat the influential country reviews conducted in 2001-03, taking advantage of other data sources now available. Preparatory work for these reviews could be carried out in 2013, enabling an initial series of reviews to be carried out in 2014, with the possibility of extending such reviews to most of all member countries in the subsequent 2015–16 Work Programme. ELGPN should also work closely with the European Commission to investigate the possibility of co-operation with OECD in relation to the PISA and PIACC results.

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. ELGPN should seek a stronger role in participating in the EU policy processes.

The European Commission will continue its subsidy for the Network from the Lifelong Learning Programme during 2013–14. The challenge for ELGPN

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is to demonstrate the value of its continued existence through its impact on policy developments and thence on guidance practice. The Commission has indicated its intention to conduct an external evaluation of the Network during 2013. The outcomes will be useful in reviewing the future of the ELGPN, including its structure and goals.

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. Lifelong guidance has tended so far to be an abstract idea, although education, employment and social inclusion policies have often addressed it. The development of a European Framework for Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems Development could help to establish it as a policy area in its own right.

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Annex 1: Composition of national delegations and contact points in ELGPN 2011–12

		Ministry of education or national agency (EDU)	Ministry of labour or employment (LAB)	Ministry of social affairs (SOC)	National forum (Forum)	Euro-guidance (EG)	Other (Other)
Austria	AT	1	1				5
Croatia	HR	3	3				
Cyprus	CY	3	2				
Czech Republic	CZ	1	1				1
Denmark	DK	3			2		
Estonia	EE	1		1			1
Finland	FI	1	1				1
France	FR	5					
Germany	DE	2			1		
Greece	EL						2
Hungary	HU	1	2				1
Iceland	IS	1					2
Ireland	IE						2
Italy	IT		1				2
Latvia	LV	2	1	1			1
Lithuania	LT	1	2			1	
Luxembourg	LU	1	1				3
Malta	MT	2					
Norway	NO	1	1				4
Poland	PL	1	2				
Portugal	PT	3	2				
Romania	RO		1				1
Slovakia	SK	1		1		1	
Slovenia	SI	1					3
Spain	ES	4					
Sweden	SE	2	1				
The Netherlands	NL	1				3	
Turkey	TR	3					
United Kingdom	UK	3					1
Belgium (Obs,)	BE	1					
Bulgaria (Obs,)	BG	1					
Total	**113**	**50**	**22**	**3**	**3**	**5**	**30**

	Country	Name	Organisation	Sector
AT	AUSTRIA	**HÄRTEL, Peter**	Styrian Association for Education and Economics	Other
		FRITZ, Sabine	Pädagogische Hochschule Steiermark	Other
		KRÖTZL, Gerhard	Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture	EDU
		HAFNER, Sabine	Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection	LAB
		MARTERER, Michaela	Styrian Association for Education and Economics	Other
		KANELUTTI-CHILAS, Erika	in between – Association for Networking, Research and Knowledge Transfer	Other
		SCHLÖGL, Peter	Austrian Institute for Research on Vocational Training	Other
HR	CROATIA	**ZECIREVIC, Mirjana**	Croatian Employment Service	LAB
		BACELIC, Irena	Croatian Employment Service	LAB
		IVANOVIĆ, Monika	Croatian Employment Service	LAB
		BAKIĆ, Hrvoje	Ministry of Science, Education and Sport	EDU
		POKRAJČIĆ, Nives	Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education	EDU
		LONČARIĆ JELAČIĆ, Nevenka	Education and Teacher Training Agency	EDU
CY	CYPRUS	**NICOLAOU, Lena**	Career Counselling and Education Service, Ministry of Education and Culture	EDU
		KAFOUROS, Antonis	Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance	LAB
		ANTONIOU, Antonis	Career Counselling and Education Service, Ministry of Education and Culture	EDU
		COSTI, Irene	Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, Department of Labour	LAB
		PAPAGEORGIOU-AFXENTIOU, Stalo	Career Counselling and Education Service, Ministry of Education and Culture	EDU
CZ	CZECH REPUBLIC	**MUHIČ, Jasmin**	National Education Institute – NÚV	Other
		MAROUŠEK, Jaroslav	Labour Office of the Czech Republic	LAB
		DRAHOŇOVSKÁ, Petra	National Institution of Technical and Vocational Education	EDU
DK	DENMARK	**JENSEN, Steffen**	Ministry of Children and Education	EDU
		FROBERG, Anne	National Dialogue Forum for Guidance/ Youth Guidance Centre Aalborg	Forum
		WOLLER, Hanne	Ministry of Children and Education	EDU
		ERNST LAURIDSEN, Annette	National Dialogue Forum for Guidance, Aarhus Technical College	Forum
		BROCK, Jørgen	Ministry of Children and Education	EDU
EE	ESTONIA	**RAMMO, Margit**	Foundation Innove	Other
		KIVIMÄE, Anne	Estonian Ministry of Education and Research	EDU
		SEPP, Annika	Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs	SOC
FI	FINLAND	**KARLSSON, Ulla-Jill**	Ministry of Education and Culture	EDU
		APIAINEN, Jaana	Ministry of Employment and the Economy	LAB
		VUORINEN, Raimo	University of Jyväskylä, Finnish Institute for Educational Research	Other

FR	FRANCE	**LEFRANC, Michel**	Ministry of Education – Directorate of European, international and co-operation relations; Bureau des affaires communautaires	EDU
		DUCHAUD-FUSELLI, Veronique	Ministry of Education – Directorate of schools	EDU
		DOSSOU-BOISSEAU, Magali	Ministry of Education – Directorate of higher education and research	EDU
		HILLER, Francois	Interministerial Delegation	EDU
		TAPIA-FERNANDEZ, Angel	Interministerial Delegation	EDU
DE	GERMANY	**LANFER, Carmen**	Federal Ministry of Education and Research	EDU
		JENSCHKE, Bernhard	National Guidance Forum for Education, Career and Employment	Forum
		MASCHNER, Heike	Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany	EDU
EL	GREECE	**VLACHAKI, Fotini**	National Organisation for the Accreditation of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)	Other
		GAITANIS, Dimitrios	National Organisation for the Accreditation of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)	Other
HU	HUNGARY	**BORBÉLY-PECZE, Tibor Bors**	National Labour Office	LAB
		KORDOSNÉ TAUSZIG, Judit	Ministry for National Human Resources	LAB
		KISS, István	University of ELTE	Other
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		KJARTANSDÓTTIR, Guðrún Birna	Centre of Lifelong Guidance Expertise, University of Iceland	Other
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		DARBEY, Linda	National Centre for Guidance in Education	Other
IT	ITALY	**VACCARO, Silvia**	Institute for the Development of Vocational Training for Workers (ISFOL)	Other
		FONZO, Concetta	Institute for the Development of Vocational Training for Workers (ISFOL)	Other
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		PUISE, Valda	State Employment Agency	LAB
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		VILCANE, Valda	Ministry of Welfare of Latvia	SOC
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		ŠIMKUTĖ, Jurga	Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania	LAB
		DULEVIČIŪTĖ, Vilija	Education Exchange Support Foundation (Euroguidance Lithuania)	EG

LU	LUXEMBOURG	NOESEN, Jos	Ministry for Education and Vocational Training, Service de la Formation Professionelle	EDU
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		KOHN, Jeannine	Chamber of Employees	Other
		HAWLITZKY, Stephen	Service orientation professionnel de l'ADEM (Professional Guidance Service of the PES)	LAB
		ROLLINGER, Antoinnette	Centre for Psychological and School Guidance, CPOS	Other
MT	MALTA	CORTIS, Sandra	Directorate for Educational Services, Student Services Department, Education Psycho-Social Services	EDU
		GRAVINA, Dorianne	Directorate for Educational Services, Student Services Department, Education Psycho-Social Services	EDU
NO	NORWAY	CHRISTENSEN, Hanne	Vox, Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning	Other
		HAGEN, Ingunn	Directorate of Labour and Welfare	LAB
		KNUDSEN, Halvor Gillund	Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training	EDU
		GRAVÅS, Tonje Foosnæs	Vox, Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning	Other
		THORBJØRNSRUD, Mari	Vox, Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning	Other
		ENGH, Line	Vox, Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning	Other
PL	POLAND	ŚWIATKIEWICZ-ZYCH, Hanna	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	LAB
		BOGDAŃSKA, Paulina	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	LAB
		BĄKIEWICZ, Anna	Ministry of National Education	EDU
PT	PORTUGAL	MOURA, Hélia	Institute for Employment and Vocational Training, I.P.	LAB
		FONSECA, Pedro	Institute for Employment and Vocational Training, I.P.	LAB
		BARBOSA, João	National Agency of Qualification	EDU
		FIGUEIREDO, Vitor	Ministry of Education and Science	EDU
		CUNHA, Pedro	Ministry of Education and Science	EDU
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		MANCO, Jorge	Swedish Public Employment Service	LAB
NL	THE NETHERLANDS	WILLEMS, Siegfried	CINOP Foundation/ Euroguidance Nederland	EG
		van DEURSEN, Peter	CINOP Foundation / Euroguidance Nederland	EG
		van den BOOM, Thea	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Directorate of VET)	EDU
		LUIJTEN, Peter	CINOP Foundation / Euroguidance Nederland	EG
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		AYDOĞAN, Yurdagül	Ministry of National Education, General Directorate for Special Education and Guidance Services	EDU
		ÇALIK VAR, Esra	Ministry of National Education, General Directorate for Special Education and Guidance Services	EDU
UK	UNITED KINGDOM	SHAW, Judith	Department for Employment and Learning, Northern Ireland	EDU
		FROGGATT, Christine	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, England	EDU
		NEILSON, Trina	Careers Wales	Other
		McDERMOTT, Martin	The Scottish Government	EDU
	OBSERVERS 2011–12			
BE	Belgium	KAGAN, Claire	Centre P.M.S. de la Communauté française de Saint-Gilles	EDU
BG	Bulgaria	KAMBUROVA, Nadezhda	National Agency for Vocational Education and Training (NAVET)	EDU

Partner organisation representatives

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Mika Launikari	Cedefop	(1.1.2011–30.3.2012)
Pedro Moreno da-Fonseca	Cedefop	(1.6.–31.12.2012)
Lore Schmid	Cedefop	
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Mick Carey	Euroguidance	
Helmut Zelloth	ETF	
Cinzia Secchi	ETUC	(1.1.2011–31.7.2012)
Agnes Roman	ETUC	(1.8.2012–31.12.2012)
Mick Woolley	EU Employment Committee	
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Annex 2:   ELGPN member countries' contributions to ELGPN 2011–12 activities[16]

		WP1 CMS	WP2 Access	WP3 Co-operation and co-ordination	WP 4 Quality	Task Group	ELGPN Steering Group	ELGPN Plenary Host
Austria	AT	x	x	x, LC		x		
Croatia	HR	x		x				
Cyprus	CY		x	x, FV		TGM	x	x
Czech Republic	CZ	x, LC	x			x		
Denmark	DK	x	FV	SM	x	TGM	x	x
Estonia	EE		x		x, FV			
Finland	FI	x	x			x	x	
France	FR	x, FV	x, LC			x		
Germany	DE	x	x		x			
Greece	EL			x	x	x		
Hungary	HU				x, LC	x, TGM	x	x
Iceland	IS		x, LC		x	x		
Ireland	IE	x			x, SM			
Italy	IT	x	x					
Latvia	LV	x	x			x		
Lithuania	LT	x			x			
Luxembourg	LU	x			x, FV	x		
Malta	MT	x, SM						
Norway	NO	x	x	x, FV	x			
Poland	PL		x, SM	x			x	x
Portugal	PT	x, FV			x			
Romania	RO			x				
Slovakia	SK	x	x					
Slovenia	SI	x			x			
Spain	ES		x	x			x	
Sweden	SE	x			x			
The Netherlands	NL			x, FV	x			
Turkey	TR		x	x				
United Kingdom	UK	x	x		x			
Belgium (Obs,)	BE	x	x	x	x			
Bulgaria (Obs,)	BG	x	x	x				
PES network						x		
ETF				x		x		
CEDEFOP						x		
Euroguidance						x		
ETUC						x		
Fedora		x			x	x		
IAEVG					x	x		
ICCDPP						x		
Total		**22**	**19**	**14**	**18**	**19**	**6**	**4**

[16]   LC= Lead country, FV= Field visit host, SM= Synthesis meeting host, TGM= Task group meeting host

Annexes

Annex 3: ELGPN meetings 2011–12

Plenary Meetings

22–23 February 2011	Budapest, Hungary
13–14 September 2011	Warsaw, Poland
24–25 April 2012	Copenhagen, Denmark
24–26 October 2012	Larnaca, Cyprus, linked with the Fourth European Lifelong Guidance Policy Conference

Steering Group meetings

23 February 2011	Budapest, Hungary (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)
24 March 2011	Online meeting
30 June 2011	Brussels, Belgium
14 September 2011	Warsaw, Poland
8 December 2011	Budapest, Hungary (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)
7 February 2012	Brussels, Belgium (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)
25 April 2012	Copenhagen, Denmark (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)
14 June 2012	Brussels, Belgium (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)
12 September 2012	Brussels, Belgium (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)
26 October 2012	Larnaca, Cyprus (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)

Task Group meetings

23 February 2011	Budapest, Hungary (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)
17 March 2011	Online meeting
30 June 2011	Brussels, Belgium
6 September 2011	Online meeting
8 December 2011	Budapest, Hungary (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)
7 February 2012	Brussels, Belgium (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)
25 April 2012	Copenhagen, Denmark (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)
14 June 2012	Brussels, Belgium (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)
12 September 2012	Brussels, Belgium (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)
26 October 2012	Larnaca, Cyprus (Joint Steering and Task Group Meeting)

WP1 field visits and synthesis meeting

28–29 March 2011	Lisbon, Portugal
14–15 November 2011	Toulouse, France
27–28 March 2012	Malta

WP2 field visits and synthesis meeting

18–19 April 2011	Utrecht, the Netherlands
10–11 October 2011	Copenhagen, Denmark
11–12 April 2012	Warsaw, Poland

WP3 field visits and synthesis meeting

10–11 May 2011	Larnaca, Cyprus
10–11 November 2011	Oslo, Norway
21–22 February 2012	Hundested, Denmark

WP4 field visits and synthesis meeting

23–24 May 2011	Tallinn, Estonia
3–4 November 2011	Luxembourg
21–23 March 2012	Dublin, Ireland

Annex 4:   Current development of national co-ordination/co-operation mechanisms

In January 2012, Tribal Education Ltd., on behalf of the Croatian Employment Service (CES), invited Dr Deirdre Hughes to produce a synopsis of the statutory provisions providing the base for National Fora for Career Guidance in ELGPN member-states. Full details of the findings are available on the ELGPN website. They draw upon available evidence in February 2012 from 27 EU member-states and two additional countries participating in ELGPN (Iceland, Norway). The main conclusions are:

- Two countries have formal government legislation in place to underpin the formation and operation of a National Lifelong Guidance Forum: **Denmark** and **Greece**.

- In two countries, **Germany** and **Poland**, a National Lifelong Guidance Forum has been developed and established as a legal entity, with constitutional arrangements firmly in place.

- Nine countries have National Lifelong Guidance Forum in place led by one or more ministries: **Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway** and **Portugal.**

- Six countries have structures in place, under the banner of a National Lifelong Guidance Forum, to support the bringing together of key stakeholders to review and take action on lifelong guidance policy and practice issues: **Estonia, Ireland, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovak Republic** and the **UK.**

- One country, **France**, has legislation in place which facilitates a direct line to the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers.

- Three countries report work in progress in setting up a National Lifelong Guidance Forum: **Bulgaria, Cyprus** and **Spain.**

- Three countries have national support groups that feed into the work of ELGPN: **Iceland, Slovenia** and **Sweden**. In addition, **Belgium** and **Italy** have loosely grouped fora that feed into national and ELGPN development plans for lifelong guidance.

- Three countries have established regional fora/partnerships: **Finland, Norway** and **Poland**.

Annex 5:   Development of the ELGPN Quality-Assurance and Evidence-base (QAE) Framework

In nearly all ELGPN member countries, some form of national quality-assurance systems or feedback mechanisms for lifelong guidance exist. Examples of the differing approaches in each of the member countries were collated and made available on the ELGPN website. From this, the first draft of a Quality-Assurance and Evidence-base (QAE) Framework was developed and initially tested for its effectiveness in eight countries (DE, DK, EE, HU, LT, PT, UK (England, Northern Ireland)). Brief guidelines were designed to inform WP4 participants on potential ways to apply the framework:

1. Use this as a **simple checklist** to assess and record what information, if any, already exists within your country.

2. List the **sources of data that currently provide this type of information**, which are available at a national, regional or local level.

3. Identify any known **sources of data that could potentially be used by policy-makers** that have not been used so far in quality assurance and impact-assessment developments within your country. This might include, for example, national youth cohort studies, regional assessment reports on career development services, local/regional/national kitemark results, etc.

4. Make a note of the **contexts in which these quality elements are being applied:** e.g. schools, VET, higher education, adult education, PES, social inclusion.

Given the diversity of philosophical, theoretical and practical approaches across the member countries, it was agreed this could not be a 'perfect scientific approach'. Instead it was viewed as a useful starting point for a practical assessment of the extent to which different countries have access to available data and where the gaps are in present arrangements. It was noted that across the EU there are several quality-assurance frameworks and systems being developed and/or used. The primary goal was to produce a QAE Framework that would enable policy-makers to identify useful information and to consider how this could be used to inform LLG policy developments.

Key discussion points

1. Comments and/or observations on the efficacy of this approach, e.g. what benefits, if any, does this framework offer to lifelong guidance policy development?

2. How could findings be applied most usefully (i) in each country and (ii) in an EU context?

3. What drawbacks, if any, are envisaged from a policy-maker perspective in making use of the QAE Framework?

4. Are there too many metrics in the QAE Framework? Should this be further simplified?

5. Where next?

Application of the QAE Framework

In the first draft QAE Framework, five broad quality elements linked to set criteria, indicators and possible data were identified, drawing upon good and interesting policies and practices in ELGPN member countries. Details of the full findings are available on the ELGPN website (*WP4 Analysis of ELGPN Responses to QA Framework*).

From this, key emergent issues informed the development of a second draft QAE Framework. Further adjustments were made to strengthen the robustness and credibility of the approach, including the rationale for the Framework and added-value benefits. Five countries participated in applying the second draft version: Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania and the UK (Northern Ireland). From this, the following observations were made:

- Similarities and differences exist between countries in their approach to data collection and analysis.
- Both quantitative and qualitative data can be yielded through the application of the QAE Framework.
- The QAE Framework is 'fit for purpose' in its application across all six sectoral areas, but there needs to be clarity on the rationale for doing so.
- Public Employment Services adopt a different and more structured approach concerning data-gathering, compared to the education sector.
- There are inherent weaknesses in adopting a client satisfaction approach only: greater attention is required on client outcomes linked to progression, attainment and transition rates.

- More longitudinal tracking activities are required, linked to levels of financial investment and expenditure on lifelong guidance.
- The cost-benefits to governments and to individuals require specific attention, alongside the benefits to employers and other key stakeholders.

The final version of the QAE Framework

The testing process culminated in a final version of the QAE Framework. Findings indicate that its successful application depends on a number of inter-linked factors, such as: the starting point in each country regarding quality-assurance systems and feedback mechanisms for lifelong guidance; and the extent to which data is gathered, analysed and shared in a systematic way within and across sectoral areas. The Framework is a tool for formal and informal reviews of the current 'state of play' and helps identify both achievements and gaps in provision that require greater policy attention. Given the diversity in member countries' cultural, social and economic contexts, the QAE Framework is *not* designed to specifically compare and analyse the level of financial investment in lifelong guidance between countries.

Annex 6: Development of the Careers Service Impact Inventory

The Careers Service Impact Inventory pilot study is being conducted, on behalf of ELGPN, by a team led by Dr István Kiss, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary. The study is designed to capture the learning outcomes from careers support activities from a young person's and adult's perspective. This involves assessing the client's viewpoints and their experiences of career-related information, advice, guidance and careers education, where appropriate, using an online questionnaire and client support materials. The measured variables are linked to the concepts of career management and career adaptability of individuals in fast-changing and often unpredictable labour markets. The underpinning aspects include: information handling strategies, self-knowledge, interpersonal skills, acknowledgement and handling of environmental factors related to career construction, identifying and integrating career goals, and enhancing career opportunities.

The pilot complements the ELGPN Quality Assurance and Evidence-base (QAE) Framework developed by WP4 (see Annex 5), and supports the underpinning principles of career management skills (CMS) developed by WP1 during 2011–12 (see Section 2.1).

The Careers Service Impact Inventory is being piloted in five member-states[17] from March to December 2012. Full and detailed user guidelines for organisations and for individuals who have given their consent to participate in the pilot are available on the ELGPN website. These comprise:

- an online client questionnaire;
- a client feedback report;
- a consent template;
- a letter for participating organisation(s);
- a set of technical information for translation in each home country.

Rationale and approach

The rationale for this methodological approach was to build on an existing tried and tested structure and systematic framework originally developed in Hungary by Kiss et al. (2009). This assessed the learning outcomes of career service interventions in a range of differing settings. The theoretical model is based upon research developed by Schiersmann (2008) and key principles underpinning the Cognitive Information Processing (CIP approach) developed by Sampson et al. (2003)[18] and the constructivist career theory developed by Savickas[19].

Methodology

The online Careers Service Impact Inventory (CSII) is now available in seven languages (DE, EE, EN, FR, HU, PT, SI). The data is stored in a secure proxy server based in Hungary. The on-line tool is used to screen background data and assess the impact of differing types and levels of career interventions. The data is classified into eight broad categories:

- complexity of the client's needs;
- the client's career-related information-handling strategies;
- self-knowledge;
- social competences;
- goal-setting and integration;
- number of career options;
- knowledge about the LMI and social context;
- personal and psychological resources.

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[17]   DE, EE, HU, PT, SI.

[18]   Sampson, J.P., Peterson, G.W., Reardon, R.C. & Lenz, J.G. (2003). *Key Elements of the CIP Approach to Designing Careers Services*. Tallahassee, FL: Center for the Study of Technology in Counseling and Career Development.

[19]   Savickas, M.L. (2005). The theory and practice of career construction. In Brown, S.D. & Lent, R.W. (eds.): *Career Development and Counseling: Putting Theory and Research to Work*. New Jersey: Wiley.

EXAMPLE: ONLINE CLIENT QUESTIONNAIRE

	Survey on effects of guidance services	
	1. not characteristic of me 2. characteristic of me to a small degree 3. slightly characteristic of me 4. entirely characteristic of me	
Nr.	**Statement**	**your score (1–4)**
1	I (still) need information about training, schools, learning programmes	
2	I require more help to plan my future	
3	I know where to find information about the labour market, wages and opportunities for employment	
4	Having actively participated in a career guidance process, I worry less about my professional future	
5	I now know how to create the best opportunities to reach my goals	
6	I was presented with helpful new ideas and new options for consideration	
7	I was able to identify and set goals to help improve my current situation	
8	I need further assistance in career decision making as I'm feeling confused	
9	I would like to broaden my knowledge on job-hunting and related skills in order to successfully apply for various positions	
10	I am able to see the benefits of received careers information	
11	My careers adviser and I were on the same wavelength	
12	I am now able to understand the various factors which led to my current situation	
13	I need further information about the labour market, wages and opportunities of employment	
14	I would ideally like to have my skills and competencies assessed	
15	Whatever I learned during the guidance process, I will be able to make use of this in the future to solve similar problems	
16	I need to further understand my emotions in relation to my career decisions	
17	I need further reassurance on career decisions I've previously made	
18	I know where to find information about professions and work-related activities	
19	My consultant and I were able to work well together	
20	I have learned how to articulate my interests and needs to others	
21	I have learned more about my strengths and abilities required to reach my goal(s)	
22	I know how to overcome the obstacles which prevent me from reaching my goal(s)	
23	I now know what steps to take in order to reach my objectives	
24	I know where to find information about various educational institutions, schools, training opportunities and programmes	
25	I felt the guidance was a stable and supportive relationship	

26	Thanks to the guidance I received, I have become more confident	
27	I have recognised the various causes of my problems and how these are interrelated	
28	Through the guidance I have learned that my previous successful strategies can be employed to solve problems	
29	I need more information on entry to professions	
30	I would like to see more clearly my fields of interest	
31	I know how to make favourable decisions for myself and what to consider	
32	I was able to at least try the various new ideas and methods which emerged during the guidance	
33	Thanks to the guidance I managed to solve my problem	
34	During the guidance I was given the confidence to know that I am capable of reaching my objectives	
35	I am (still) worried about my future and need some emotional support	
36	I still need recognition and encouragement about my plans	
37	I take a positive attitude toward myself	
38	On the whole, I am satisfied with my situation	
39	I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events	
40	Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations	
41	I can usually handle whatever comes my way	

Report sheet for the client

**Careers Service Impact Inventory
scores**
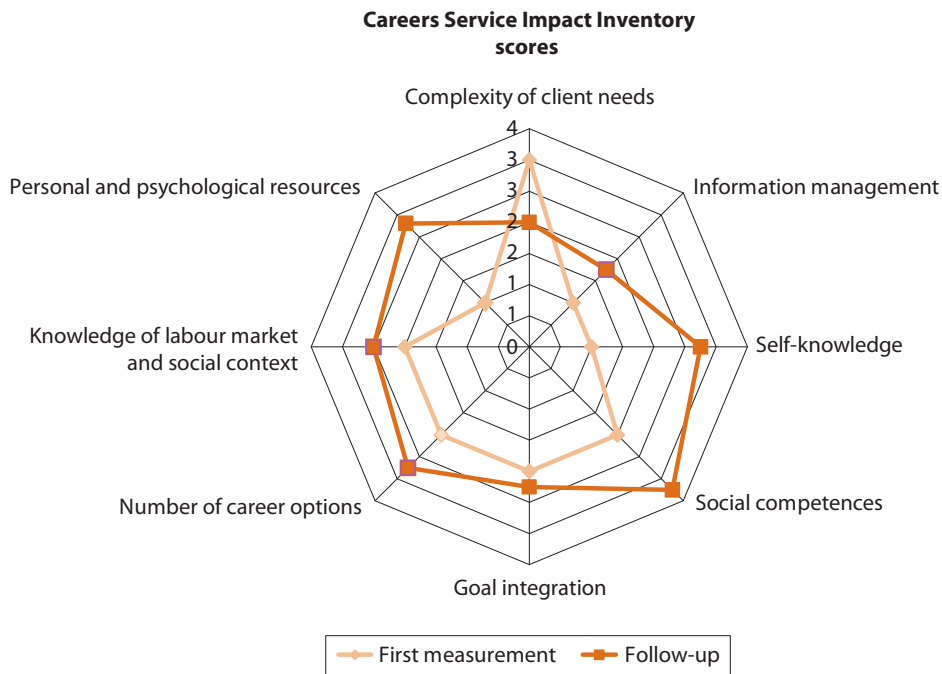
Participants and cross-sectoral testing

In the participating countries (DE, EE, HU, PT, SI), the ELGPN national lead contacts formally invited national career service providers across six sectoral areas to participate in the pilot. These included Public Employment Services, NGOs and private-sector organisations. Individuals participating received immediate feedback through the on-line system, and participating organisations were able to download anonymised and cumulated results after 50 clients had participated in the study.

Further details

The on-line survey system for data gathering can be accessed at: http://ktl.jyu.fi/ktl/elgpn/elgpnmembers/workpackages/wp4/wp4members/study

Annex 7:   Development of the Guidelines for Career Management Skills Development

The Guidelines for Career Management Skills Development were based on an analysis of data on CMS policy and practice development in 15 countries participating in ELGPN WP1. The data were collected using a Career Management Skills Questionnaire. The Questionnaire was based on the CIPO (content, input, process, outcome) model as a frame of reference and focused on CMS development in six sectors: education, vocational education and training, higher education, adult education, employment, and social inclusion. It thus covered schools, employment organisations, workplaces, non-governmental organisations, and community and other settings. The questionnaire comprised 11 questions (see Table 1).

Fifteen countries replied to the questionnaire (CZ, DE, DK, FI, HR, HU, LV, LT, LU, MT, PL, PT, SE, SI, SK).

The answers to most of the questions helped to obtain valuable information on various aspects of CMS development (except some questions, for example No.9 'How is CMS teaching/development financed within each sector?' appeared to be non-specific to the description of CMS development).

Questions used for the design of the Catalogue were:

- No.2: 'What CMS classifications are used in order to define main groups and categories of such skills within each sector?'
- No.3: 'Which theoretical models underpin CMS delivery in your country within each sector?'
- No.4: 'Which are the target groups for CMS teaching/development within each sector?'
- No.5: 'Who teaches/develops CMS within each sector?'
- No.8: 'Which methods are used to teach/develop CMS within each sector?'
- No.11: 'Which methods are used to measure outcomes within each sector?'

Table 1: Career Management Skills Questionnaire

		Sectors					
Question categories		Schools *(Providers of compul-sory and secondary education, except secondary VET)*	VET *(Secondary and tertiary)*	HE *(Providers of academic tertiary education)*	Adult education *(Providers of adult education, including non-academic tertiary education)*	Employment *(Providers of services to unemployed and/or employed)*	Social inclusion *(NGOs and other providers of services to 'at risk' groups)*
1. Context	1. How is CMS (or the terms used to refer to a similar set of skills) defined in your country within each sector?						
	2. What CMS classifications are used in order to define the main groups and categories of such skills within each sector?						
	3. Which theoretical models underpin CMS delivery in your country within each sector?						
	4. Which are the target groups for CMS teaching/development within each sector?						
2. Input	5. Who teaches/develops CMS within each sector?						
	6. How are those who teach/develop CMS within each sector trained specifically for the job?						
3. Process	7. What is the place of CMS in curricular/intervention organisation within each sector and what is the time allocation?						
	8. Which methods are used to teach/develop CMS within each sector?						

Annexes

Table 1. (continued)

	9. How is CMS teaching/ development financed within each sector?					
4. Output/ outcome	10. What are the key outcomes of CMS teaching/ development within each sector?					
	11. Which methods are used to measure outcomes within each sector?					

Annex 8:   Factors in implementing CMS policy successfully

Introduction

Introducing a new policy – such as Career Management Skills (CMS) – brings with it challenges in implementation. This is because, as Ball[20] notes, change often entails processes that are both complex and messy. A task force from WP1 set out to explore the nature of such dynamic change, and specifically the factors that facilitate CMS policy implementation in a variety of settings, including education, VET, higher education, adult education, employment, and those catering for vulnerable groups. A questionnaire was prepared for this purpose, 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. A more comprehensive analysis of the results of this thematic study, which also includes country examples, is available on the ELGPN website.

The responses to the questionnaire were analysed using a framework developed by Honig[21] and elaborated by Sultana[22], which draws attention to four key aspects that impact on the policy implementation process:

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

The analysis led to the identification of six factors that are important in the development and implementation of CMS policy. These factors are briefly described below. They are proposed as points for reflection and discussion rather than as the outcomes of rigorous research. They are therefore tentative, and in no way seek to make any grand claims about the complex process of policy implementation.

1. The existence of CMS regulations that are incorporated in both education and labour legislation

Countries reporting having CMS policy in place mostly refer to the education sector (i.e. compulsory schooling, VET, and/or higher education); even here, the presence of CMS policy varies greatly between the different levels. Countries with high levels of commitment to developing and implementing a CMS policy have shown that commitment through promulgating relevant legislation. Countries without such legislation 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. Sustainable funding of CMS activities

Allocation of resources generally follows the promulgation of legal provisions regulating the implementation of a policy. The survey conducted by the WP1 task force confirmed that there generally is a close connection between budget allocation and sectoral implementation of CMS. Survey respondents referred to the importance of budgetary issues, with unstable funding being detrimental to the implementation of CMS activities.

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[20]   Ball, S. (1998). Big policies/small world: an introduction to international perspectives in education policy. *Comparative Education*, 34(2), 119–130.

[21]   Honig, M.I. (ed.) (2006). *New Directions in Education Policy Implementation: Confronting Complexity*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

[22]   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.

3. The presence of an influential communication platform that focuses on CMS policy formulation and implementation

Effective CMS policy implementation is unlikely to take place if those promoting the policy do not have strong leadership in the field, with the power to monitor compliance. Survey responses for the education sector suggest that CMS policy formulation and implementation is facilitated when consultation is carried out across both vertical and horizontal axes. Survey responses also suggest that when there is a lack of communication between the education and the employment sectors, CMS policy is unlikely to be successfully implemented. But the formal establishment of a communication platform between the different sectors, while necessary, is not sufficient of itself to guarantee the success of CMS policy implementation. It is therefore important to identify the key players, as who pushes the reform can have an impact on how implementation unfolds, if it does so at all. Key players include policy makers, policy practitioners, experts, and researchers; their influence varies on their profile (e.g. low/middle/high-level officials, obscure/representative practitioners), which sector these actors come from, and whether their contribution to the communication platform is more or less action-orientated.

4. CMS policy design and implementation as both a short- and long-term process that is planned and gradual

Pace is another important issue that has to be addressed when considering the success of CMS policy implementation. Most of the survey respondents expressed themselves in favour of gradual and incremental implementation of CMS policy. The process, however, has to be continuous and sustained. Those steering the implementation process have important decisions to make as to when to speed up or slow down the pace. They also need to work with

both short-term and long-term agendas in mind – another aspect of the pace dimension.

5. Policy implementation is 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.

6. Monitoring of the CMS policy implementation process

Practically all the respondents of the survey highlighted the fact that the success of CMS policy implementation relies on adequate evaluation and monitoring of each step of the process. Continuous evaluation is therefore at the heart of policy implementation, given the number of challenges that necessarily arise in transforming ideas into action.

7. Conclusion

This study has suggested that the success of CMS policy implementation depends on a number of

interlinked 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.

Annex 9: National legislation on lifelong guidance

In January 2012, Tribal Education Ltd., on behalf of the Croatian Employment Service (CES), invited Dr Deirdre Hughes to produce a synopsis of legislation on career guidance in EU member-states. Full details of the main findings are available on the ELGPN website. The findings draw upon desk research literature from within ELGPN, Cedefop, Euroguidance and other sources such as EU resolutions and relevant reports. A total of at least 55 website searches were also undertaken in January-February 2012, followed by email correspondence and data exchange with national experts in EU member-states. A total of 16 national experts provided responses on legislative arrangements in their respective countries. In some cases, the range and depth of information was very detailed: where this occurred, the full text is provided in the appendices available on the ELGPN website.

Sultana (2004)[23] previously indicated that:

'One of the key ways the State exercises its role as strategic manager of public services is through legislative mechanisms. These can stipulate the nature, extent, frequency and quality of a service that must be offered, setting it out as an entitlement for all, or for specific groups of citizens.'

It is useful to note that:

- Ministries in EU countries are structured differently, though ministries of 'education' and 'employment' are usually the two main guarantors of public career guidance services.
- Legislation for 'career guidance' (where this term is used) tends to be rather general in nature[24] and often embedded (or hidden) in

major legislation on education, vocational education and training and/or employment, or in some form of regulation where the right of citizens to vocational counselling is formally declared.

- A number of countries do not have formal legislation regarding career guidance, but prefer to manage it within the context of civil service rules and regulations of the respective education and employment departments.
- Widespread variation exists (even within countries) regarding the degree of legal specificity in relation to career education, career guidance, career information, career management skills, practitioner competences and vocational education and training.
- Some countries have detailed strategic goals or frameworks for lifelong guidance, but in many cases these are not directly linked to legislative measures specifically related to career guidance.
- In a few cases, legislative measures address career guidance but this is currently the exception rather than normative practice.
- In many cases, client entitlements are not specified in such a way that entities failing to provide the service, or to provide it adequately, are susceptible to legal action.
- Many EU countries are currently reviewing existing legislative measures that include career guidance strategies and services in response to immediate political, economic and social policy imperatives.

The policy landscape is moving fast, with some government departments downsizing and/or merging: this has resulted in the size, shape and nomenclature of government departments changing. New management and delivery arrangements, legislation, decrees and regulation are unfolding at a rapid pace in, for example, **Greece, Hungary** and **Ireland**. The

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[23] Sultana, R.G. (2004). *Guidance Policies in the Knowledge Society: Trends, Challenges and Responses across Europe*, p.94. Cedefop Panorama Series 85. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

[24] Ibid, p.12.

necessity for clarity on existing legislation on career guidance becomes even more crucial as new players become involved in career guidance policy formation. In the absence of this, there is a real danger that careers provision and entitlements may not be fully understood, or may be misinterpreted or indeed lost in the quagmire of renewal and policy proliferation.

Some EU countries do not have formal legislation regarding career guidance: for example, **Cyprus**. Instead, systems are in place to bring key stakeholders together to formulate plans and priorities. In many cases, member-states have put in place National Strategic Plans designed to strengthen communication, co-operation and co-ordination between agencies: for example, **Austria** and **Germany**.

Differing EU member-states have designed and implemented alternative forms of legislation, some of which are best described as being broadly generic rather than specific to career guidance: for example, **Czech Republic** and **Netherlands**. In contrast, countries such as **Finland, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Poland** and **Slovak Republic** have detailed and specific legislation that has been recently updated or is in process of being reviewed. In countries such as **Spain** and **Sweden**, legislation on career guidance exists but is left mainly to communities and regions to self-regulate. Across the EU, a move from centralised to decentralised governance structures provides more fragmented provision across the relevant countries.

The division of ministries with separate responsibilities for education, vocational education and training, higher education and employment, supported by separate acts and regulations, can often impede the ongoing development of lifelong guidance provision. The formation of a national lifelong guidance forum, underpinned by legislation and direct inter-ministerial support, can help to address this ongoing challenge, as reported in **Denmark, Estonia** and **Luxembourg**. In **France**, an Information and Guidance Delegate appointed by the Council of Ministers reports to the Prime Minister. In **Portugal**, the National Agency for Qualification and Professional

Education, under the joint management of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Economics in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Security, is responsible for the National System for the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences, sharing with the PES (IEFP) the responsibility for adult guidance.

These examples indicate the critical importance of having a clear sense of vision and leadership in lifelong guidance provision, where key roles and responsibilities are made explicit. It is in this context that a national lifelong guidance forum can perform a significant role in influencing ministers and other interested parties on priorities that will enhance current and future lifelong guidance policy developments. This involves having a shared sense of purpose and focus among key stakeholders in areas where separate and/or joint action can be achieved, ideally linked to cost-benefit savings.

There are some notable examples where governments have decided to legislate and/or regulate career guidance policies. For example, in **Denmark,** a National Dialogue Forum is firmly embedded within a clear legislative directive which outlines specific responsibilities and priorities. In Greece, a National System for Quality Assurance of Lifelong Learning incorporates principles and quality indicators for career guidance underpinned by legislation. However, these are exceptions rather than common practice across the EU. Some other alternative examples of good and interesting policies and practices can be found in EU member-states such as **Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia** and **Poland.**

Legislative arrangements in place that guarantee a right of access to vocational/career guidance provision are prevalent in **Belgium** (French-speaking region), **Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, Malta, Norway** and **Slovenia**.

In some countries, there is a growing trend towards a new duty upon teachers in schools to deliver career education linked to policy goals for greater freedoms and autonomy, as illustrated in the examples provided by **Greece, Ireland** and the **UK** (England and

Scotland). Also, the extent to which curriculum content and contact time with students is supported by formal legislation and/or statutory and non-statutory regulation varies considerably across EU member-states: **Austria, Hungary, Latvia** and **Poland** provide interesting examples. In the **UK** (Wales), statutory guidelines and regulatory frameworks for careers and the world of work exist but are often weakened by the failure of schools to adhere to the recommended requirements.

The professional competences and qualifications of careers counsellors have been given specific attention within legislation in countries such as **Finland, Iceland** and **Poland**. In some cases, regulation by professional bodies is a preferred approach, often linked to quality standards and licence or professional register developments: examples are **Germany** and the **UK**. The critical importance of multi-professional and inter-disciplinary approaches for professional development has become a major imperative in many member-states.

Government requirements for more individuals to take opportunities and responsibility for their own learning and work by using financial incentives or vouchers for participation have attracted interest in some countries: for example, **Belgium** (Flemish-speaking region). New policies rather than state legislation that support the active engagement of employers and greater utilisation of career information centres, labour market intelligence and ICT systems are also prevalent in many EU member-states.

Legislation on career guidance targeted on marginalised or particular groups appears to be embedded within a wide variety of acts. In the case of **Poland**, specific attention is given to vocational guidance for professional soldiers or former professional soldiers. A common theme across much of the legislation is that those most vulnerable or 'at risk' are highlighted as a priority. For example, in **Lithuania** the law on handicapped social integration (2008) addresses vocational guidance, counselling and assessment of skills as part of professional rehabilitation services.

In many cases, higher education legislation does not have an explicit statement on guidance. But student entitlement for individual study plans is included, for example, in **Finland** and **France**. **Germany** provides an interesting example of close co-operation between higher education institutions and the Public Employment Service. As an alternative, regulation through quality-assurance arrangements may be led by government-funded agencies, an employer representative body and/or professional bodies: for example, in the **UK**.

Annex 10: Perceived added value to ELGPN member countries

Austria	• Participation in ELGPN is an essential element of Austrian policy, strategy and politics. • Involvement of Austrian participants in all ELGPN WPs, including lead role in WP3, is a clear expression of how Austria views the importance of co-operation and participation in ELGPN. • Austria has used the momentum of ELGPN participation in various ways. The National LLG Forum has been active for several years; national and regional dissemination activities take place on national and European strategic approaches; and new policy activities have started in all relevant sectors, from early childhood education to adult education, and in labour and social affairs.
Belgium	• Participation as an observer to ELGPN has helped to increase the focus and feed the thinking on guidance in the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (French Community of Belgium): a current government statement explicitly cites the development of guidance systems, leading to the decision to become a full member in the next phase.
Croatia	• All 4 WP outcomes are very relevant to project activities currently taking place in Croatia: establishing a national forum, new legislation, national quality standards and a new model of career guidance centres.
Cyprus	• Reinforcing the co-operation between the ministries providing guidance. • Creating the opportunity for better co-operation between guidance providers and the academic community. • Establishment of National Guidance Forum.
Czech Republic	• Better understanding of CMS policies and practices such as CMS development and assessment in various settings. • Acknowledgment of the importance of co-ordination mechanisms and structures for the development of guidance provision.
Denmark	• Inspiration to policy development in two areas: CMS and developing indicators for guidance.
Estonia	• ELGPN creates favourable conditions for co-operation between member countries: the representatives and experts of the network are there to exchange experience and learn from each other. • Practical and systematic international co-operation helps to raise awareness of stakeholders at the national level. • ELGPN assembles representatives from different policy sectors: both labour market and educational themes are discussed in the national teams. • Of particular value in 2011-12 has been the development of a quality-assurance system including an evidence base, and providing inputs to the national strategy.
Finland	• Enhancing the national co-ordination mechanism regarding lifelong guidance. In September 2011 a Steering and Co-ordination Group for Lifelong Guidance was established, succeeding a previous working group established in 2010. The tasks of the new Group (2011–15) are: (1) to promote and develop national, regional and local information, guidance and counselling, including government programme activities such as the 'social guarantee' (to provide each young person with a workplace or apprenticeship training); (2) to strengthen co-operation between different sectors and different providers of guidance; (3) to act as the Steering Group for the ESF programme on 'Guidance in Adult Education'; and (4) to follow up and influence the ELGPN's work.
France	• France was able to ensure that its policy decisions were congruent with the goals and means on which ELGPN participating countries had agreed. • ELGPN study visits and information on the evolution of policies in other countries gained through ELGPN participation have encouraged French policy-makers and given them supportive arguments and evidence. • In particular, ELGPN has provided a valuable reference point for enhancing the use of ICT in guidance in France.
Germany	• Positive opportunity to use ELGPN activities as reference points for stimulation and reinforcement of national processes. • Synergy between ELGPN thematic priorities and similar developmental activities and projects promoting better access to guidance and guidance quality development in Germany. • In addition to promote the process of quality development in guidance, making use of the expertise of ELGPN experts and their professional contributions during national workshops and conferences. • Brochure on the German guidance system originally developed for European partners and ELGPN purposes unexpectedly also met needs within Germany, leading to extra demand for copies.

Annex 10 (continued)

Greece	• The opportunity to review the systems and mechanisms of other participating countries in quality assurance and in co-operation/co-ordination of career guidance services, to exchange ideas, interesting policies and good practices, and to build on their experience and progress. • More specifically, based on the WP4 Quality-Assurance and Evidence-base (QAE) Framework, we have further developed the Greek System for Quality Assurance of Career Guidance Services and the Quality Assurance System of Lifelong Learning (known as the P3 system). • Also, based on the co-operation structures of other European countries, we learned about strategies, processes and tools in order to organise our new National Guidance Forum and to enhance the access of all target-group users to career guidance services.
Hungary	• ELGPN impact was significant under the first phase of the Social Renewal Operational Programme (SROP) process 2007-11. SROP Measure 2.2.2 was designed and implemented to set up a Hungarian national lifelong guidance system. Its four pillars were in line with the EU resolution on lifelong guidance. • The Hungarian Lifelong Guidance Council set up in 2008 was also strongly influenced by the work of ELGPN and related international developments.
Iceland	• The ELGPN focus on improving access has started a dialogue between major stakeholders on how to proceed with building a comprehensive ICT guidance system in Iceland. The connection to ELGPN is very important in this dialogue and the future work. • Because of ELGPN, the need for a national policy on lifelong guidance has become more apparent and steps have been taken to work systematically on creating a framework for this. In the work ahead, the national forum will have a pivotal role to play.
Ireland	• Participation in the ELGPN, as the designated national representative, enables NCGE to fulfil its remit to inform the Department of Education and Skills (DES) on EU and international developments in guidance. • As a direct result of ELGPN membership, DES approved the establishment of the National Forum on Guidance, co-ordinated by NCGE, to enhance co-operation and dialogue between guidance providers nationally. • NCGE can introduce and discuss issues such as quality assurance and career management skills in a general context with guidance stakeholders as a result of the work in ELGPN.
Italy	• An important added value for Italy was a clear, complete and updated picture of EU policies and guidelines on the four guidance priorities for 2011–12, and awareness of the role of guidance in past, present and future lifelong learning and employment policies in EU, within a more integrated • approach. Participation in WP3 has enabled the promotion and dissemination of its work at national and local level, supporting the implementation of co-ordination and co-operation mechanisms as well as communication between the different stakeholders in the local guidance systems. • Active involvement in WP1 provided an opportunity to use ELGPN CMS outcomes as reference points for inspiration, further discussion and reinforcement of national processes.
Latvia	• ELGPN activities have been significant in raising awareness, increasing shared understanding and arguing the case for career guidance development in Latvia. Participation in ELGPN, as well as regular briefings on ELGPN activities at the national guidance forum, have increased understanding on the role of career guidance in the education and employment sectors and the need for co-operation between these sectors. • The Latvian national forum was established partially based on recommendations produced by ELGPN WP3 in 2009–10. • Participation in 2011–12 activities has helped to intensify the work of the national forum and influenced the decision to earmark LVL 2 million for increasing access to and quality of youth career services within the current ESF planning period. It is planned to increase state budget funding for implementation of careers education in general education schools from 2013.
Lithuania	• ELGPN has provided valuable experience through the open method of co-ordination, peer-learning activities and exchange of best practices, keeping the national guidance community – policy-makers, guidance providers and other stakeholders – informed on the latest developments in lifelong guidance at European level. • Bringing this knowledge to the national context has given an incentive to further develop the national guidance system and to promote the European dimension in the national context. • ELGPN reflection notes, examples of best practices and other outputs have been used as a resource in the development of national guidance products – legal documents, programmes, etc. • In 2011 a national conference on career management skills was organised by Euroguidance Lithuania on the basis of knowledge and experiences gained through participation in ELGPN.

Annex 10 (continued)

Luxembourg	• The first period of ELGPN had direct impact on Luxembourg through the setting up of the national forum and the discussion on developing a lifelong guidance strategy. • After delivery of the concept paper to relevant ministers, the task was to turn this strategy into practice, in which the outcomes of ELGPN 2011-12 had more of an 'adjustment' and clarifying role. • Nonetheless, the outcomes of the two work packages in which Luxembourg participated had a stronger influence: on quality; and on reforming the curricula of the lower cycle in secondary education to include a career management skills approach.
Malta	• Increasing awareness at local level of the importance of strengthening career guidance in terms of the four ELGPN thematic activities. • Putting career guidance more strongly on the country's agenda. • Setting up working groups which focus both on the dissemination of ELGPN work to all stakeholders involved in the delivery of career guidance and on implementing the draft career guidance policy.
Netherlands	• The study visits had much added value, particularly for the participants. • The four European priorities (CMS, access, quality, co-ordination) are anchor points for looking at guidance topics in the national context. • A guidance network is established and working under the umbrella of the ELGPN programme.
Norway	• Norway has now established a national unit for lifelong guidance: experience from ELGPN feeds directly into the main tasks of co-ordinating and developing the field nationally. • Being members of ELGPN has contributed to increased knowledge about complex issues within all four of the WP topic areas: having taken part in all the WPs, we now have a very useful network for discussion and exchange of experience. This has been particularly relevant to the discussions on setting up a national forum: participation, roles, tasks, objectives. • Discussions on other issues at national level (e.g. quality) are informed directly by ELGPN work.
Poland	• Opportunity for better co-operation between career guidance activities at national level through involvement of the most important government institutions, responsible for strategic solutions and legal provisions, in ELGPN work programme implementation. • Synergy between Euroguidance and ELGPN activities.
Portugal	• ELGPN has been a very good support to improving guidance in Portugal. • Results are visible in the co-operation between PES and education sectors. • Exchanges with other member countries have supported the implementation of new tools and methodologies in the fields of quality assurance, co-operation, access (implementation of a new ICT tool) and development of a national common career management skill competence framework between the different levels of education and PES. • ELGPN is also supporting the implementation of a national forum during 2012.
Slovakia	• Unfortunately, developments in Slovakia have not kept up with the outcomes of the ELGPN Work Programme 2011–12. No formal activities of the National Forum for Guidance took place during the previous government. • It is hoped that following the election of spring 2012, more attention will be paid to improved co-operation between the actors in the field of lifelong guidance. • Although ELGPN activities and products did not influence national guidance polices so much in 2011-12, they contributed to several initiatives and projects at institutional level.
Slovenia	• ELGPN helped to add a few more stones to the mosaic of the lifelong career guidance system, on which work started in 2007 with its support. In particular, work began in 2011–12 on developing a national training system for guidance counsellors, national quality standards, and a national guidance glossary. • Many promotional activities were carried out to spread awareness of EU and national guidance policies, and ELGPN and national guidance projects. • ELGPN is viewed as a mechanism for continuous improvement of the lifelong guidance system. Its intensified co-operation between EU member-states is seen as crucial to develop a national guidance system which will meet present and future challenges.

Annex 10 (continued)

Spain	• Providing easy access to the state of the art in lifelong guidance, and involvement in its development. • Acquiring more awareness, understanding, experience and expertise by networking with representatives of other countries and relevant organisations, who deal not only with guidance, but also with education, employment and social policies and strategies. • Learning by being exposed to new initiatives and innovative approaches to lifelong guidance. • Belonging to the largest and most meaningful lifelong guidance community in Europe. • Working alongside the European Commission and developing common EU priorities. • Deepening attention to issues or sectors relevant to each country's national needs, so leading in due time to benefits for both the national government (through more coherent and informed strategies and policy development) and citizens (through improved provision of guidance services).
Sweden	• Establishment of a national forum. • Raising awareness of the importance of guidance among Swedish stakeholders. • Enhanced communication/co-operation between the education and labour market sectors. • Large conference on career development arranged for stakeholders within both education and labour market areas. • National forum established as reference group for the Swedish ELGPN representation. • Opportunity to look into other countries' policies and practices – on quality in guidance, for instance. • Common understanding and definition of the national guidance system. • Valuable contacts around Europe.
Turkey	• The concept of lifelong guidance has been disseminated at national level. • A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in 2009 enhance communication, co-ordination and collaboration between all the stakeholders. A web-based National Career Information System has been developed on a collaborative basis, with around 1,300,000 registered users to date; studies to improve the system are in progress. • Social inclusion and guidance for children with special educational needs are important issues for Turkey. • Through ELGPN, Turkey is able to learn from good practices all over Europe.
United Kingdom	• Broader understanding of how career guidance operates in other countries. • Network of career guidance contacts in Europe.

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.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT is to communicate the outcomes of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) during 2011–12 to relevant policy-makers and stakeholders at both European and national levels.

The ELGPN represents a major development in support of national lifelong guidance policy development in Europe. The ELGPN currently has 29 member countries (AT, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LV, LT, LU, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR, UK), with 2 additional countries as observers (BE, BG). The participating countries designate their representatives in the Network, and are encouraged to include both governmental and non-governmental representatives. As a Member-State-driven network, it represents an innovative form of the Open Method of Co-ordination within the European Union (EU).

The report describes the work undertaken by ELGPN during 2011–12, including evaluation of its impact at member-country level. Members report that participation in the Network has enriched their awareness of possible responses to common challenges and given them a fresh perspective and new insights into their national provision. A key strength of the Network has been the strong ownership of its activities expressed by the national delegations. The report also analyses relevant policy developments at EU level, and outlines a vision for the future. In particular, it indicates the components of the Europe 2020 Strategy which are relevant to lifelong guidance, including its headline targets and flagship initiatives.

Cover: Martti Minkkinen

http://elgpn.eu