



**Background Paper<sup>1</sup>**  
**in preparation for the**  
**Peer Learning Activity of ELGPN Work Package 2:**  
**“Support for Development of**  
**National Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems”**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1. This short paper is meant as a reflection note in preparation for the Peer Learning Activity (PLA) organised by the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, and to be used by Work Package 2 members during their meeting in Prague. At this PLA, representatives from EU and EEA Member States will explore features and building blocks of a Lifelong Guidance system, and learn from the progress different countries have made in implementing these features. During the meeting, participants will:

- present their experience;
- compare and contrast approaches to various aspects of the theme of lifelong access to career guidance;
- identify critical success factors;
- identify options which the various stakeholders could take to facilitate and broaden access to career guidance for different client groups throughout their life path.

1.2. This work will be undertaken against the backdrop of the Education/Youth Council's Resolution on Lifelong Guidance<sup>2</sup>, which affirmed as priorities:

- “the development of high quality guidance provision for all European citizens, *accessible at all stages of their lives* to enable them to *manage their learning and work pathways and the transitions therein*”; and which
- stressed “the refocusing of guidance provision *to develop citizens' lifelong and lifewide learning and management skills* as an integral part of education and training programmes”.

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<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of this Background Paper was used to guide a joint Cedefop/National Finnish Board of Education peer learning event, organized in Helsinki in May 2006.

<sup>2</sup> See: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/resolution2004\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/resolution2004_en.pdf) [my italics]

The Resolution also highlighted:

- “the need for flexibility and diversity of guidance provision including the use of innovative methodologies and technologies, outreach and related services *to increase access to such services*, especially in respect of provision for hard-to-reach young persons and adults and to overcome economic and geographical disadvantage” and invited Member States to:
- “seek to ensure *effective co-operation and co-ordination between providers of guidance* at national, regional and local levels in the provision of guidance services, in order *to widen access and to ensure the coherence of provision, especially to groups at risk*”; to
- “encourage schools, institutes of further and higher education, training providers to *promote reflective learning techniques and autonomous learning*, in order to enable young people and adults to self-manage their learning and career paths effectively”, and to:
- “encourage and support providers of initial and continuing education of guidance practitioners to *reflect current best practice across the Union* in their training programmes”.

This work also supports the implementation of the Maastricht Communiqué<sup>3</sup> on European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training, which includes guidance as a priority at national level and invites Member States, inter alia, to use common instruments, references and principles *to support guidance throughout life*, and to raise stakeholders’ awareness of these instruments at national, regional and local levels in Member States to enhance visibility and mutual understanding. Views reinforcing the importance of lifelong access to guidance are also echoed in the European Social Charter (Article 9), in the International Labour Organisation (ILO) statement on Human Resource Development and lifelong learning (Article 150), and in the European Employment Guidelines.

1.3. This reflection note draws on a number of sources, including: the OECD (2004), European Training Foundation (Sultana, 2003), World Bank (Watts & Fretwell, 2004), CEDEFOP (Sultana, 2004) and DG Employment, Social Affairs & Equal Opportunities (Sultana & Watts, 2005) career guidance reviews and syntheses, the OECD/European Commission *Career Guidance: A Handbook for Policy Makers*

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<sup>3</sup> See: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/news/ip/docs/maastricht\\_com\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/news/ip/docs/maastricht_com_en.pdf) [my italics]

(2004), and CEDEFOP's (2005) *Improving Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems: Using Common European Reference Tools*.

- 1.4. The focus on the provision of guidance throughout life reflects developments in the labour market which suggest that, in knowledge-based societies and economies, transitions between education, training and work are becoming less linear, and that consequently skills in managing education, training and occupational pathways are increasingly needed by all citizens throughout their lifespan. The emphasis on the need for developing competences in managing career and learning is inspired by a desire to empower citizens to understand and gain some control over conditions generated by what is increasingly being described as a 'risk society',<sup>4</sup> where lifelong job tenure and guaranteed economic security are an increasingly threatened feature in the social contract between the state and the individual. In such a context, guidance can be seen as one aspect of the state's duty to provide support to its citizens as they navigate the challenging social and economic vicissitudes of contemporary life.
- 1.5. In this sense, guidance is both a public and private good: it can have a positive impact on society and on the personal development of the individual which stem from the role that it plays in assisting people to make decisions about learning opportunities, promoting active citizenship, and so on. However, as the Council Resolution points out, existing policies, systems and practices for guidance do not match the demand of knowledge-based economies and societies. In other words, guidance has not yet moved away from a model that emphasises one-off decision-making at key and stable transition points, in order to become a service that supports and accompanies decision-making throughout life. If guidance had to engage in such a 'paradigm shift', this would have several implications both for the various parties and stakeholders involved in the delivery and use of guidance services, and for improving and broadening access to services.
- 1.6. The reflection note is structured in such a way as to address the implications and challenges related to the development of a lifelong guidance paradigm for: systems; providers; users; resources; and the guidance profession. The note addresses, in particular, the following inter-related questions:
  - What implications and challenges does the implementation of a Lifelong Guidance system have for the various parties and stakeholders involved in the delivery and use of guidance services?

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<sup>4</sup> See U. Beck (1992) *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. London: Sage.

- How can access to guidance services be enhanced, so that these are available throughout life at times, locations and in forms that respond to the variegated needs of all individuals and groups?

As the latter question suggests, a consideration of lifelong guidance approaches necessarily engages the theme of access. The issue of access has two aspects to it: First, in the traditional guidance paradigm, the needs of a wide range of citizens—including employed adults, VET and tertiary students, mothers with young children, women returning to work, older adults, people with disabilities, remote communities, and disadvantaged groups—are not adequately catered for. Secondly, as the OECD, ETF, CEDEFOP and DG Employment reviews (see para. 1.3 above) show, guidance services have in the past tended to be delivered in too limited a range of locations, ways, times of the day or week, or points in the life cycle—thus limiting access from a lifelong and lifewide perspective.

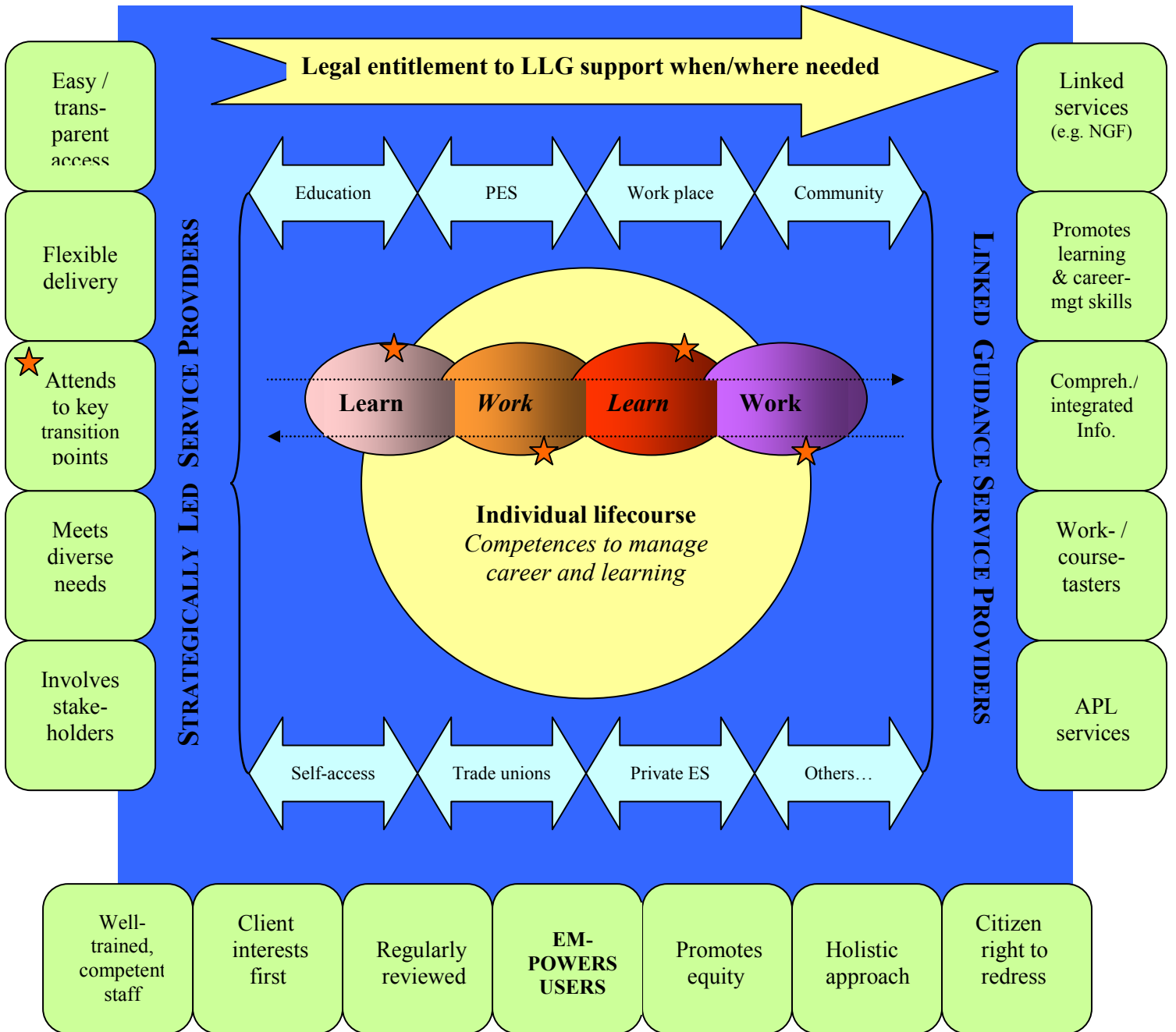
- 1.7. In addressing these issues, the reflection paper provides some building blocks in the design and implementation of a lifelong guidance paradigm. The note invites Peer Learning Activity participants to share their experiences, to reflect on each others' achievements and challenges, and to engage in open and critical debate in relation to the overall goal of the meeting.

## **2. IMPLEMENTING AND ENHANCING ACCESS TO A LIFELONG GUIDANCE SYSTEM**

### ***2.1. Implications and challenges for guidance systems:***

- 2.1.1. A lot of work has already been done at a European level in the attempt to articulate the *features* of a lifelong guidance system, the *means* to implement a system which exhibits these features, and the *principles* that should underpin it. Reference is made in particular to the reflections and proposals of the Commission's Lifelong Guidance Expert Group (see for example the "Key features of a systems model of lifelong guidance for European countries" – especially Sections 2 and 4 of the CEDEFOP 2005 publication *Improving Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems: Using Common European Reference Tools*). A number of key elements of a Lifelong Guidance System are here presented in diagrammatic form, with some of the more important among them considered in some detail immediately after.

**Diagram 1: Aspects of a national Lifelong Guidance System**



- 2.1.2. A central finding of the guidance reviews is that we presently do not have examples of integrated guidance systems in Europe. Most countries have *two systems of public guidance provision*, one in the education sector, the other in the labour market sector. In addition, in some countries guidance services are offered within enterprises, by trade unions, by private employment services, and/or by non-governmental organisations. Generally speaking, the linkages between these different providers—whether public, private, employment- or community-based are often underdeveloped: Career guidance provision therefore ends up being a collection of *disparate sub-systems*, each with its own history, rationale and driving forces, rather than a coherent and integrated set of arrangements. This has a number of negative consequences for the provision of a service that is experienced by clients as *coherent, continuous and seamless*. Lack of co-ordination results for instance, in several communication failures (e.g. a failure to integrate information on the content of jobs, information on education and training options and pathways, and information on labour market supply and demand). It also leads to a situation where the respective strengths of guidance staff in the different sectors are not comprehensively drawn upon and holistically mobilised to serve clients from a lifelong perspective.<sup>5</sup>
- 2.1.3. The establishment of a *national forum* for guidance policy and systems development, encouraged by the Council Resolution, which includes both government and key stakeholder representatives such as employers and trade unions, as well as the key organisations that deliver services, is an important building block in the development of a more integrated, less fragmented delivery system that takes into account the client's lifelong needs for guidance and support in career and learning development. National and regional guidance forums can serve to mobilise the strengths of the respective providers to ensure access to the best possible services, when and where needed.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> We are here referring to *national* guidance systems. A lifelong guidance service that takes a European dimension into account would also strive to establish linkages with other member states. Web-based information platforms already exist in order to facilitate information sharing about education and training (PLOTEUS), as well as about employment (EURES) opportunities Europe-wide.

<sup>6</sup> In 2007, CEDEFOP commissioned the preparation of a manual on the setting up of National Guidance Forums. The document, titled *Coming Together: Establishing and Developing National Lifelong Guidance Forums: A Manual for Policy-Makers and Stakeholders*, will soon be published.

- 2.1.4. While across Europe there is an enhanced understanding of the need for Public Employment Service staff and resources to be placed at the disposal of young people who are still in formal education, the recent survey on guidance in Public Employment Services (Sultana & Watts, 2005) has indicated a trend in the opposite direction. As unemployment levels increase, and as governments put more pressure on the PES to place people in employment, *short-term goals take precedence over guidance for longer-term career development*, and ‘curative’ measures take precedence over ‘preventive’ ones. Many PES in fact report a withdrawal of support for school-based career guidance, and a concentration of limited human and other resources on the out-of-work. The retreat from education institutions and the focusing on the unemployed go counter to the broader, linked and sustained provision of services that the lifelong guidance paradigm implies (see para. 2.2.5 and 2.2.6).
- 2.1.5. It is clear from the guidance reviews that the demand for career guidance services exceeds supply. The issue of access to guidance services throughout life that respond to the variegated needs of a broad range of clients requires systems to *develop more flexible delivery methods and new perspectives on how such access should be funded*. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and call centres, for instance, have great potential for *extending access*. For some groups of clients, and especially for those who have mastered the competences required to manage career and learning, ICT-based resources are particularly helpful in facilitating access to up-to-date information and forms of guidance support when needed. Innovative ways of reaching out to at-risk groups also need to be developed. Some of the best practice across Europe and beyond involve vulnerable groups in designing, planning, implementing and monitoring career guidance policies and services, thus greatly enhancing the development of services that are relevant to their needs.
- 2.1.6. A lifelong guidance system is sensitive to the fact that pathways through life are greatly influenced by the gender, ethnic and social background of citizens as well as their age, and that transitions are not experienced in the same way by these different categories of clients (see also para. 2.2.8 below). A lifelong guidance system, therefore, adopts a *lifecourse* perspective, in that not only does it provide resources and support at different points throughout life, but it is designed in such a way as to take into account the structural features that shape the passage through life in different ways for different groups of people.

## ***2.2. Implications and challenges for providers:***

### *The education sector:*

- 2.2.1. In most countries, career guidance is offered to students at the secondary level: *few if any offer services at the primary school level*. This is an important factor to consider in the implementation of lifelong approaches to career guidance, given that the foundations of career self-management skills (for example decision-making, self-awareness, self-confidence) are laid at an early age. The promotion of meta-cognitive skills (i.e. the skills needed to plan, organise and evaluate one's own cognitive processes) is, in contrast, taken very seriously in Quebec, for instance, where the notion of the 'guidance-oriented school' (*l'école orientante*) effectively signals the need to embed the competences needed to manage one's learning and development throughout life. This approach is also reflected in the Canadian Blueprint for Life/Work Design (see f.n.6).
- 2.2.2. Traditionally, school guidance focused on key transition or cut-off points as students moved through the education system, and decisions had to be made as to which subject clusters to study, or which schools to move on to. A lifelong guidance perspective both broadens and deepens the remit of school guidance services, in that *the goal becomes that of promoting self-reflective, autonomous and skilled decision-making*. Several countries across Europe have introduced a focus on career education at the lower secondary level, either as a separate curricular subject or integrated into a broader subject or included in one or more different study areas. There are many examples of interesting curricular practice in this regard, with some enhancing the learning process by requiring students to keep a portfolio on the theme of work. This helps learners bring together the different inputs made in different subject areas, facilitating a more purposive and self-reflective approach to educational and career development and decision-making.<sup>7</sup> Some countries have gone one step further in ensuring that students adopt a lifelong orientation towards learning and career development by introducing *competency frameworks* or *curricular guidelines*. In this way, the key skills needed by students in the shift to a

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<sup>7</sup> Some countries, such as Belgium and Finland, for instance, have introduced electronic or web-based portfolios: these integrate existing instruments, such as information on vacancies, curricula vitae, and training possibilities, and brings them on line so that people can manage their own profile and can compare the information they have about themselves with other data-sets.



self-reflective and autonomous learning which are central to the paradigm shift in guidance are set out in a systematic and structured manner.<sup>8</sup>

- 2.2.3. In those countries where guidance services are still deeply embedded in a traditional paradigm, *large groups of students have limited access to support in managing career and learning*. The reviews note that guidance support is underdeveloped in the VET sector, as well in the higher education sector. In both cases, the assumption is often made that students have already chosen their educational and occupational path, and that they therefore have less need for support. This takes little account of notions of lifelong learning and occupational mobility. Neither does it take account of the increasing flexibility that is included in upper secondary and higher education programmes, or of the wide range of career options and jobs that can flow from broadly designed vocational education and training, as well as general higher education.
- 2.2.4. Similarly underdeveloped is *guidance provision for early school-leavers*. A school guidance programme that has adopted a lifelong perspective would strive to detect and assist young people who leave school early or without qualifications to help them to find meaning in staying at school; or to have well planned exit strategies that will enable them to re-engage in learning, and successfully complete their secondary education. It would also work closely and cross-sectorially with other individuals and agencies (e.g. PES staff, youth workers, social workers, community workers and other adults) that might be better placed to reach out to disaffected youth, in order to ensure that the latter develop the necessary competences to manage career and learning in the post-compulsory school years in second-chance learning programme, employment training programmes, and so on.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> One example of such a framework is the ‘Learning Outcomes from Careers Education and Guidance’ (QCA, 1999) which was subsequently developed into a National Framework for careers education and guidance in England for those aged 11-19. The framework, which sets out the skills the students should achieve, can be found at: <http://www.cegnet.co.uk/resource/content/files/317.doc>. Another example of a framework is the Canadian Blueprint for Life/Work designs: <http://www.blueprint4life.ca/>. Among the approaches adopted to teach the skills outlined in such frameworks are experiential and interactive learning sessions, such as those promoted by the ‘Real Game’. Information on this can be found at: <http://www.realgame.com/>

<sup>9</sup> Many of the marginalised and disadvantaged groups targeted by career guidance services tend to be the most reluctant to use services that are administered in a formal institutional context. The challenge here is to reach out to these groups, to work with them on their own terms and in contexts that are less formal and more familiar to them.

*The employment sector:*

- 2.2.5. The career guidance reviews have indicated that despite an awareness of the paradigm shift in service provision, where lifelong career management has become critically important, *public employment services tend to focus exclusively on the out-of-work*. Indeed, the recent survey of guidance provision in Public Employment Services (Sultana & Watts, 2005) has shown the extent to which the PES in Europe needs to respond to the challenge arising from the necessity to open up its guidance services to *embrace a more long-term, life-long perspective*—one that is more in tune with the needs of citizens in the emergent knowledge economy where individuals increasingly move through occupational and training pathways in more complex, non-linear ways.
- 2.2.6. The almost exclusive focus on the unemployed means that PES are increasingly *failing to cater for the heterogeneous nature of the adult population*. The guidance reviews indicate that, across Europe, there are few easily accessible services available for employed adults; few enterprises cater for the career development needs of their employees; fee-for-service provision that people can purchase privately is very limited; and employers and trade unions have shown limited interest to date in providing career guidance even though they often recognise in principle the need for workforce development in order to improve competitiveness and equity.<sup>10</sup> Employed adults need access to guidance for career development within their company, for career development outside it in similar work, or to retrain in new skills so that they can move into different types of jobs. A lifelong perspective on career guidance would entail new partnerships between guidance services based in education and training institutions, in companies, in trade unions, and in the community to promote workplace and workforce career guidance provision, with guidance becoming an integral part of adult learning programmes. In this way, too, service delivery is more likely to be experienced by the client in a seamless, holistic way, with societal resources being mobilised in support of goals that have, as an outcome, both the private good and the public good.

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<sup>10</sup> In relation to this, see the European Social Partners Framework for the Development of Lifelong Competences and Qualifications (2002). For a 2006 evaluation of this framework, see [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/social\\_dialogue/docs/eval\\_framework\\_III\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/social_dialogue/docs/eval_framework_III_en.pdf)

- 2.2.7. Lifelong guidance systems will need to develop more effective strategies for the *accreditation of prior, experiential informal and non-formal learning*. Lifelong learning and training goals can be more effectively and equitably reached if informal and non-formal learning acquired throughout life are recognised and accredited in ways that open up new opportunities for citizens. As a consequence, Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) can become one of the building blocks of a lifelong guidance system, leading to the further empowerment of individuals. Such developments have special consequences for vulnerable groups, particularly for immigrants who may have a strong skills profile which is not supported by paper qualifications.
- 2.2.8. A lifelong approach to career guidance which gives priority to facilitating access is aware of the fact that groups of unemployed as well as employed adults have quite different characteristics and challenges. The life tasks faced by older workers, for instance, or women returners, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and so on, are quite different. A guidance service that values lifelong access takes into account the *changing needs of clients through their different life stages*, rather than ignoring distinctive needs by offering uniform provision.
- 2.2.9. Ageing populations and demographic structures leading to pension funding problems across most of Europe will require both later retirement ages and more flexible transitions to retirement. Citizens need *specialised information and advice to support active ageing*: part-time work, more fulfilling leisure, voluntary work, and activities to keep themselves mentally and physically fit. Most adult guidance providers have been slow to mobilise career guidance services to support such active ageing. Flexible transitions between full-time work and full-time retirement (mixing full-time work, part-time work, voluntary work and periods of inactivity) will require much closer harmonisation of career planning and financial planning. Employers and worker representatives can promote and take initiatives in service delivery of third age guidance, using combinations of public and private partnerships.

*Other guidance services providers:*

- 2.2.10. A lifelong guidance paradigm implies that *enterprises* provide career development services for their employees. The guidance reviews indicate,

however, that when such services are offered at all, they tend to be confined to larger organisations, and even then, tend to target managerial and professional staff, rather than the full range of employees. In addition, services offered within the enterprise aim to encourage career development internal to the enterprise, with little attention to career opportunities that exist elsewhere.

2.2.11. *Trade unions* are particularly well-placed to offer their members career information and guidance, and to support career development in the face of changing occupational fortunes and opportunities. In many countries, however, unions have shown limited interest in the development of career guidance services for their members. Where they offer such services themselves, these tend to be delivered by non-specialised personnel and focus on access to training rather than wider career development.

2.2.12. The guidance reviews indicated that where *private employment services* exist in Europe, they tend to focus on job brokerage and head hunting, and on outplacement for redundant workers. A few services offer personal career guidance to executives. Only rarely do they offer guidance for career development to a broad range of users, and they therefore cannot presently be considered as key players in the construction of lifelong guidance systems in Europe.

### **2.3. Implications and challenges for users:**

2.3.1. The management of career and learning lifelong requires individuals to develop a *distinct set of competences* that have already been referred to in section 2.2.2 above. Such competences are known to be a key variable in explaining wage differentials in OECD countries.<sup>11</sup> Key among these competences is the ability to formulate individual action plans for further learning, work and other life goals. Guidance services in both the education and the employment sectors have made some progress in supporting clients in this regard. Such initiatives are especially effective when they are part of a broader set of activities that support learning about work and training in experiential (e.g. work and course tasters) and other ways. There are now several countries that can provide examples of good practice in this regard: the critical element here is the structuring of the

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<sup>11</sup> See OECD (2002) “Rethinking human capital”, *Education Policy Analysis*, Paris.

competences needed to manage career and learning in such a way that they are clearly recognisable and attainable, and that citizens are knowledgeable and purposive in the way they construct their personal action plans—be it in seeking or taking up employment opportunities, or in developing entrepreneurial skills to generate employment for themselves.

- 2.3.2. The image of a smart, entrepreneurial individual capable of navigating the stormy waters of fast-changing and insecure labour markets, and purposefully making choices from among the opportunities available, has to be tempered by the realisation that such opportunities are often determined by the vitality or otherwise of the economy and sometimes by the social milieu of which the individual is a part (see vignette, Annex 2). A lifelong guidance system that is wary of the tendency of some states to curtail welfare guarantees would argue that while individuals and groups need to develop the competences to manage career and learning in self-reflective and purposive ways, they need to do so within supportive, resourced environments. In other words, *autonomy* needs to be balanced by *solidarity*.
- 2.3.3. The lifelong guidance paradigm implicitly encourages the ‘empowerment’<sup>12</sup> of citizens in terms of developing career planning and employability skills. This is in contrast to the medical model that is often associated with older guidance approaches, which tended to position the client as a passive recipient of services delivered by expert providers using batteries of tests and assessment tools. Lifelong guidance invites the client to develop competences to manage career and learning development, and to engage in self-assessment and reflective, self-directive and autonomous processes, with the dialogic support of career guidance mentors. *The lifelong guidance paradigm therefore envisages that clients are persons with resources, not just with problems.* Lifelong guidance approaches tend to be influenced by social constructivism, an approach to career and career decision-making that adopts a holistic and interactive stance: here, career planning and actions represent an integral part of people’s life experiences, and career experiences become meaningful when they are perceived and constructed in people’s life contexts.

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<sup>12</sup> A term that in this context is preferred to the more commonly used term ‘activation’, given the negative and interventionist connotations that the latter word has.

## **2.4. Implications and challenges for resources:**

- 2.4.1. A lifelong guidance approach which sets out to facilitate access to as broad a group of clients as possible needs to be *well resourced*. If the shift to lifelong guidance is to move beyond rhetoric, then it has to become widely available in workplace settings and in sites such as leisure centres, small communities, shopping malls, public libraries, citizen advice centres, community centres, and homes. Currently, in most countries, few guidance services are available outside the standard opening hours of educational institutions and government offices. Peripatetic services, outreach services and shift work are not widely used to deliver career guidance. *Making guidance services widely accessible has important resource implications.*
- 2.4.2. There are financial and resource implications—besides organisational ones—in the attempt to transform a fragmented age- and sector-specific approach to career guidance provision to one that is integrated in a lifelong learning framework and that allows a diverse range of services to be provided throughout the lifespan within such a framework. In contexts where adequate funding is a continuous challenge, guidance services need to rise to the challenge of *developing more cost-effective delivery methods combined with impact assessment*, and not rely solely on the expensive and labour-intensive model of face-to-face interviewing. Cost-effective delivery methods that could increase access to services for greater numbers of clients include: self-service approaches and one-stop-shops; outreach-working through related professionals; systematic use of networks of career mentors; embedding career education programmes in the school and tertiary education curriculum; group career guidance; and new technologies, including ICT and call centres. The provision of services of differing intensity to reflect different levels of need also facilitates best use of resources.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The organisation of services in tiered manners can ensure that, at a first level, clients can access printed, audio-visual or on-line information in a self-service mode, without the need for staff to assist them. Such skills would have been developed through the framework of competences referred to in 2.2.2 above, with compensatory or supplementary assistance being provided by specially designated staff. A second tier of service consists of relatively brief personal interviews, while a third tier of service provides sustained personal guidance to those who are perceived to need it and/or feel they can benefit from it. This can range from group help to in-depth personal interviews, and can include job clubs, and sessions that help users to recover self-confidence and motivation and to develop their employability skills.

## **2.5. Implications and challenges for the profession:**

- 2.5.1. A comprehensive, linked career guidance service presupposes *a linked profession*: in other words, servicing staff need to be in touch with providers in other sectors, to be familiar with each others' roles and responsibilities, and to share the same conceptual language and professional frameworks. A lifelong approach to career guidance provision would suggest that there is much to be gained if guidance professionals from the different sectors receive similar pre-service training,<sup>14</sup> and to have joint continuing professional development sessions from time to time. This would facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration and the development of more integrated approaches to servicing client needs across the lifespan.
- 2.5.2. A lifelong guidance paradigm sets out to broaden and deepen access to as wide a variety of client groups as possible. In order to do so, and in order to provide a differentiated service ranging from self-service modes with minimum support to more intensive, one-to-one guidance interviews, it may be necessary for the guidance profession to be reconceptualised in terms of *differentiated staffing*. This could entail a wider use of trained support staff, with career guidance practitioners acting as managers and co-ordinators of services, not just as personal service providers. It would also entail national training and qualifications pathways that enable career guidance practitioners to progress from non-expert to expert roles.
- 2.5.3. Guidance training programmes should be designed in such a way as to ensure that *practitioners have themselves integrated a competency framework that facilitates the management of career and learning throughout life*. It is when practitioners have themselves made a shift to considering themselves within a lifelong career and learning development perspective that they can hope to support the structured and systematic, purposive self-reflection and action planning that they require from their clients, and to enjoy credibility and legitimacy with them.

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<sup>14</sup> One way of achieving this goal is to develop modular, cross-sectoral programmes. Here staff from the different sectors could follow the same modules in some areas, with some aspects of the training programme targeting the specific knowledge base and skills needed within a particular sector (see J. McCarthy (2001) 'The skills, training and qualifications of guidance workers.' OECD paper [available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/36/24/2698214.pdf>] - a more recent version of the paper appeared in the *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, Vol. 4, 2004).

2.5.4. *A lifelong guidance paradigm requires new sets of competences from guidance staff*, and practically each of the points raised in this reflection note has implications for the pre-service and continued training of career guidance workers. The lifelong guidance paradigm, for instance, requires guidance staff to work with other professionals who offer different services to clients. In schools, for instance, career guidance staff need to work closely with other subject teachers given that increasingly guidance issues feature across the curriculum, and transition and lifelong learning issues are increasingly seen as a cross-curricular responsibility of all school staff members. They also need to know how to encourage and support self-reflection in young people as they take part in experiential learning about the world of work through their involvement in work taster schemes, and to assess the extent to which important competences to manage learning and career have been developed. Guidance staff in public employment services, on their part, would have to be able to co-ordinate their efforts with colleagues based in schools, trade unions, enterprises, or community organisations. The concern with broadening access to vulnerable groups requires guidance staff to have competences in multi-cultural counselling, for example, and/or to build guidance capacity in vulnerable communities. The emphasis on flexible delivery systems implies that career guidance staff are skilled in the use of, for instance, telephone help lines and e-mail-based services to overcome geographical disadvantage and to allow access out of standard office hours. *Work therefore needs to be done in the development of an appropriate curriculum framework which is suitable for the training of different categories of career guidance staff that will deliver lifelong guidance.*