

Presidency Conference

Lifelong Guidance 2020

4th European Conference on Lifelong Guidance Policy

24 October 2012, Larnaca, Cyprus

1. Introduction

The main objective of this Presidency Conference is to examine the transversal role of lifelong guidance in meeting the Europe 2020 priorities. The conference seeks to enhance structured mutual policy learning between the ELGPN member countries in developing their national guidance systems. The agenda covers selected national examples and European-level syntheses of lifelong guidance policies, structures and services. The conference conclusions (for draft, see Annex 1) will identify key areas for further action at EU and national levels to take forward lifelong guidance issues and the respective role and contribution of key stakeholders (ministries of education and employment, social partners, etc.).

After the plenary presentations, the agenda consists of three rounds of table discussions with a consistent structure:

- 10-minute briefing by invited speaker;
- 30 minutes for table discussions;
- 20 minutes for plenary discussion.

There are no separate rooms for the table discussions. Table groupings will be same for the three sessions.

The purpose of the table discussions is two-fold:

- to identify immediate next steps in amplifying the Council 2008 Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies in the light of Europe 2020 strategies (Annex 3);
- to reflect on which mechanisms and policy instruments at EU level could assist such developments.

2. Work tasks

Each table is invited to discuss the questions presented in the light of the conference background paper (Annex 2) and the inputs of the invited speakers. The tables are also invited to explore possibilities for concrete and feasible next steps to be undertaken in 2013-20 with a view to further developing the career guidance policies and systems in their countries and in the European Union. Draft conclusions are presented in Annex 1. These were extracted from discussions within the ELGPN Plenary Meetings and peer learning activities 2011-12, as synthesised by a working group with representatives of the current ELGPN Steering Group in April 2012. The conference participants are invited to amend and approve these conclusions in the table discussions, and also to present supplementary conclusions and action points which might be included in an appendix to the document.

Each table should nominate a facilitator and a rapporteur. The rapporteur is asked to provide feedback on the draft conference conclusions and up to two responses to each question as the table reflections for the conference proceedings. Questions 2, 4 and 6 need not be confined to the session theme. The responses should be written directly on the online template. During the plenary discussions, the tables are invited briefly report their responses. The conference conclusions will be extracted from the table responses during the final one-hour session.

TASK 1: Consider and respond to the following questions.

11.00 – 12.00 Session 1: National Lifelong Guidance Policy
Strengthening guidance in turbulent times: rights and responsibilities
- Prof. Ronald Sultana, University of Malta
- *Table discussions*

1. What role should the state play, together with a range of service providers, in helping citizens develop the career management skills needed to navigate turbulent economic times? How can we ensure that the promotion of CMS does not inadvertently and unfairly lead to the responsabilisation of individuals for situations that are caused by macro-economic dynamics?
2. What are the implications for concrete and feasible next steps to be undertaken in 2013-20 with a view to further developing the career guidance policies and systems in the European Union and its Member States, in the light of the Europe 2020 strategies? Should the draft in Annex 1 be amended and/or supplemented in these respects?

12.00 – 13.00 **Session 2: Organisation of Lifelong Guidance Services**

Integrated all-age guidance services

- Trina Neilson, Chief Executive, Careers Wales, UK

- *Table discussions*

3. How feasible and how desirable is an all-age service (across the policy fields) as a means of delivering an all-age lifelong guidance system? What alternative means are there for binding such a system together?

4. What are the implications for concrete and feasible next steps to be undertaken in 2013-20 with a view to further developing the career guidance policies and systems in the European Union and its Member States, in the light of the Europe 2020 strategies? Should the draft in Annex 1 be amended and/or supplemented in these respects?

14.00 – 15.00 **Session 3: Voice of Users**

Expectations and perceived role of lifelong guidance by European citizens

- Ms. Santa Ozolina, Policy Officer Employment and Social Affairs, European Youth Forum

- *Table discussions*

5. In what ways can the voice of users best be articulated, harnessed and utilised in the development of lifelong guidance systems?

6. What are the implications for concrete and feasible next steps to be undertaken in 2013-20 with a view to further developing the career guidance policies and systems in the European Union and its Member States, in the light of the Europe 2020 strategies? Should the draft in Annex 1 be amended and/or supplemented in these respects?

TASK 2: At the end of the table discussions, the rapporteur uploads the one or two most important ideas related to each question on the online document.

TASK 3: The rapporteur presents these two conclusions in the plenary discussions. Where conclusions overlap with those of other tables, the rapporteur is asked to present only additional conclusions.

15.30 – 16.30

Conclusions from the plenary discussions

- Dr. Tibor Bors Borbély-Pecze, HU

- Dr. Raimo Vuorinen, ELGPN Co-ordinator

- Prof. Tony Watts, UK

Annex 1

Conference Conclusions Draft 0.1 (to be approved and elaborated during the conference)

1. Preamble

Over the last decade lifelong guidance has been recognised as a crucial dimension of lifelong learning, promoting both social and economic goals: in particular, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of education, training and the labour market through its contribution to reducing drop-out, preventing skill mismatches and boosting productivity. Two EU Resolutions of the Education Council (2004; 2008) have highlighted the need for strong guidance services throughout the lifespan to equip citizens with the skills to manage their learning and careers and the transitions between and within education/training and work.

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 fields and the need for a more comprehensive strategy for lifelong guidance policy development in the EU and the Member States.

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 may be directed by official documents such as laws and decrees, or by other structures and processes. 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 should be understood as a right which implies a social contract with citizens, as part of the European social model.

2. Actions required within the Member States

The Conference invites the EU Member States to:

(a) Strengthen the transversal role of lifelong guidance in the areas of education and training, VET, higher education, employment and social inclusion, in order to reach the EU headline targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy, within the Flagship Initiatives (in particular, New Skills for Jobs, and Youth on the Move) and to attain the ET 2020 benchmarks.

(b) Speed up the implementation of a more comprehensive strategy for lifelong guidance policy development in their country and close co-operation between the

worlds of education and work, both at political and operational levels, in order to address skills mismatches.

(c) Encourage learning and work mobility through the use of European tools such as EURES, EUROPASS, the (future) European Skills Passport, ECVET, and EQF.

(d) Promote and support entrepreneurship, self-employment, social enterprises and business start-ups through adequate information, guidance and counselling.

(e) Encourage guidance services to use the EU instruments to forecast and anticipate skills needs: the European Vacancy Monitor which provides labour market information on short-term vacancies; Cedefop's long-term forecasts; and the (future) EU Skills Panorama, which will help to identify emerging skills shortages in specific occupations across or within sectors.

(f) Make use of ESF to enhance the quality of lifelong guidance systems, ensuring the development of career management skills throughout life and guaranteeing access to information, counselling and guidance services for all citizens, in accordance with national priorities.

(g) Depending on their specific situations and legislation, to set up quality-assurance systems and mechanisms to improve efficiency in service provision, to increase institutional financial accountability and to create transparency from the perspective of the citizen. The development of quality assurance in career development services should not be an isolated process: instead, it is an integral cross-cutting theme in a national lifelong guidance system that encompasses education and training, employment and social inclusion.

(h) Make use of the ELGPN resources, in particular the European Resource Kit, for reviewing, where appropriate, lifelong guidance policies, systems and practices at national level, in accordance with national contexts and legislation, and with a view to helping citizens to prepare for and manage the multiple transitions they will have to face throughout their life-span.

3. Actions required at European Union level

The Conference invites the European Commission to:

(a) Consider lifelong guidance as a cross-cutting policy area within the existing key policy documents and processes.

(b) Step up close co-operation between the worlds of education and employment, both at political and operational levels, to ensure fruitful policy-making.

- (c) Check that in each relevant European process (Copenhagen, Bologna), and in each flagship initiative activity, lifelong guidance is taken into account.

- (d) Include lifelong guidance as a transversal priority in the four thematic objectives that are proposed within the draft ESF Regulation for 2014-20: promoting employment and labour mobility; investing in education, skills and lifelong learning; promoting social inclusion; and combating poverty.

- (e) Pursuing and intensifying co-operation with relevant international organisations such as the OECD (in particular, by exploiting the results of PISA, and of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competences – PIAAC), as well as other relevant regional or worldwide initiatives such as ETF’s work in neighbouring countries.

- (f) Reinforce European co-operation on lifelong guidance, in both the education and the employment sectors, through the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) with the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme and in liaison with CEDEFOP and Euroguidance, in order to assist Member States in implementing the priorities identified in the Europe 2020 strategies.

Annex 2

Lifelong Guidance 2020

4th European Conference on Lifelong Guidance Policy, Cyprus, 24 October 2012
The transversal nature of Lifelong Guidance in the light of the Europe 2020 strategies

Background paper

The aim of this paper is to stimulate reflection on the cross-cutting nature of lifelong guidance and to encourage ELGPN member countries to mobilise all available resources with a view to enhancing their national/regional/local lifelong guidance policies and services.

The paper addresses the following issues:

- **The EU policy context.**
- **The transversal role of lifelong guidance strategies with respect to the EU 2020 priorities, including how the cross-cutting approach can function in practice at national, regional and local levels.**
- **The support of ELGPN (in particular through the Resource Kit).**

1. The EU policy context

The current financial and economic crisis has dramatic consequences in terms of unemployment and poverty, and may seriously jeopardise social cohesion. In particular, the situation of young people on the labour market continues to deteriorate significantly.

With the aim of coming out of the crisis, the EU Member States have adopted the Europe 2020 Strategy designed to create ‘smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ over the decade 2010-20. The three main objectives for 2020 all require effective and efficient lifelong guidance policies:

- Increase the level of employment: 75% of the population aged 20-64 to be employed.
- Reduce early school-leaving (the share of early school-leavers to be under 10%) and raise young people’s level of qualification (at least 40% of the younger generation to have a tertiary degree).
- Reduce the number of people at risk of poverty: 20 million fewer people to be at risk of poverty.

The supporting flagship initiatives (*Youth on the Move, Innovation Union, the Agenda for New Skills and Jobs, the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion*) and

the *Integrated Guidelines for Implementing the Europe 2020* require increased and more systematic co-operation between the education & training and employment sectors. Accordingly, they reinforce and extend the transversal role of lifelong guidance in supporting transitions and progression between education, training and employment, and in progressing social inclusion policies.

The Europe 2020 Strategy focuses upon education and training through the Strategic Framework for European co-operation in education and training (ET 2020), which sets supplementary benchmarks to be attained by 2020; their achievement, too, implies the support of integrated guidance and counselling services. The benchmarks are:

- 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.
- 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% (against a 2010 benchmark of 12.5%).

Each Member State has been invited to define its own objectives in the National Reform Programme, taking into account its national situation and its budgetary resources.

Over the last two years, the Member States have adopted a series of policy documents (see Appendix) that draw up priorities in the fields of schools, vocational education and training, higher education, adult education, employment, youth and social inclusion, constituting a framework for action at European and national levels:

- 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.

All these documents point to the substantial contribution of lifelong guidance, considering its cross-cutting/transversal role between education & training and employment as well as social inclusion policies as a condition for their success.

Two EU tools are currently being developed to be used across all these fields:

- The European Classification on Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) is a multi-lingual taxonomy of skills and qualification terms used in and across all occupational areas. It is designed to be used to help people

- describe their experiences in education, at work and from life in general, in relation to various occupations. It enables the content of guidance to be extended from occupations to a more detailed picture of the underlying skills and competences.
- **The EU Skills Panorama** is an online tool which will contain updated forecasts of skills supply and labour market needs up to 2020. It is designed to improve the transparency of the labour market for job-seekers, workers, companies and/or public institutions.

2. The transversal role of lifelong guidance with respect to the EU 2020 priorities

Career guidance is characterised by a multidimensional scope. It has to be considered in its three dimensions: as a policy, as a service, and as an individual process.

2.1 The development and implementation of lifelong guidance policies at national level is a key element for attaining the EU strategy goals

2.1.1 Lifelong guidance is an integral part of policies and programmes relating to education, training, employment and social inclusion. It is a key element of lifelong learning strategies.

The lifelong guidance system includes provision in schools, VET institutions, universities, and adult training systems for employed and unemployed people.

The transversal role of lifelong guidance should be strengthened in the areas of schools, VET, higher education, adult education, employment, social inclusion and youth policy, in order to reach the EU headline targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy and to attain the ET 2020 benchmarks.

In order to develop guidance policies and programmes in a co-ordinated way across the education, training and employment sectors, it is necessary to speed up the implementation of a more comprehensive strategy for lifelong guidance policy development and close co-operation between the worlds of education and employment, both at political and operational levels.

2.1.2 What are the pillars of a comprehensive strategy for lifelong guidance?

- **First pillar: Develop policy partnership.** The involvement of all the stakeholders in the design and implementation of the lifelong guidance strategy constitutes a prerequisite: relevant stakeholders include the ministries for education, higher education, employment, youth and social inclusion, as well as regional/local authorities, social partners, and service providers. Partnerships also need to be developed between trade unions and employer organisations in informing and advising their members within enterprises.
- **Second pillar: Enhance the policy elaboration process.** The national economic development plan includes a specific section on lifelong guidance, detailing

- specific and complementary objectives for education, employment and social inclusion policy fields.
- **Third pillar: Setting up a co-ordination mechanism** at national/regional level on a legal basis with a close connection with the national/regional authorities. A document or co-ordination plan may formalise the goals of the partnership. Strong leadership and governance should be established with the view to stimulating and ensuring the coherence of seamless lifelong guidance provision. The adoption of policy guidelines through a legal instrument, law or regulations can guarantee that the awareness of the key role of lifelong guidance is shared by all the stakeholders and taken into account at the highest policy levels.
 - **Fourth pillar: Ensure policy support resources.** Financial allocations for lifelong guidance systems development are clearly identifiable within education and employment budgets. The state or regional/local authorities should ensure that the level of public investment in lifelong guidance system is in accordance with its role in, for example, addressing skills mismatches and combating unemployment. The cost-benefits should be effectively measured and regularly assessed. ESF support can be used for the implementation of a comprehensive strategy for lifelong guidance.
 - **Fifth pillar: An institutional quality-assurance system** encompassing education and training, employment and social inclusion, and comprising an evidence-based system. Recommendations from monitoring and evaluation of lifelong guidance developments and activities are integrated into further policy reforms and action plans in the education and employment sectors.

2.2 Organisation of lifelong guidance services: individualisation, co-ordination and quality

The lifelong guidance services are organised to ensure that citizens have access to guidance throughout their lives and particularly for managing transitions.

2.2.1 Individualisation: The public lifelong guidance services are organised to guarantee all persons access to free, full and objective information on occupations, training, qualifications/diplomas, job opportunities and remuneration levels as well as access to quality and networked advisory and assistance services.

Users benefit from personalised advice to enable them to make an informed choice of occupation, training or certification suited to their individual aspirations and occupational prospects associated with the foreseeable needs of society and economy.

Such guidance services are delivered at times, in locations and in forms that respond to their diverse individual needs.

Multi-channeling ICT services added to personal assistance and face-to-face interventions extend and enhance access to guidance: a free online service provides each person with basic information and basic personalised advice on vocational guidance and training.

Particular attention is paid to facilitating access to relevant guidance for groups at risk of social exclusion, such as: early school-leavers, unemployed people, persons with disabilities, and migrant populations.

2.2.2 Co-ordination: how services can be organised and steered

The regional level may be the best level to ensure a coherent and consistent organisation of lifelong guidance services. Regions have greater proximity with individuals and enterprises, and hence the capacity to build more suitable responses to their expectations and needs.

Regions can ensure better links between labour market forecasting and lifelong guidance services to support the matching of supply and future demand within the labour market.

The small geographical coverage of the regions is an asset to ensure three public policy objectives: pooling understanding of user requirements (individuals and employers); developing co-ordination and co-operation between all the stakeholders; and developing access to guidance services in a coherent way.

2.2.3 Quality features

- To improve efficiency in service provision, quality-assurance frameworks should be elaborated. They 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.
- More coherent databases are needed to provide statistics on key target-groups and to support the monitoring and evaluation process.
- Greater attention must be given to cost analyses of different types of lifelong guidance services and specific interventions: this requires continuous professional development of practitioners, to build specific knowledge and competences in this regard.
- The process of gathering evidence on individuals regarding the role of lifelong guidance in the process of validation of informal and non-formal learning should be exploited.
- Principles should be promoted for reviewing practitioner competence, and citizen/user involvement in the design and development of services.
- Quality-assurance systems and quality standards for lifelong guidance should be linked to evidence-based policies in the worlds of education and training, and of employment.

Embedding quality assurance in careers education should include monitoring and tracking students' progress, linked to attainment levels, progression routes and drop-out rates.

2.3 Involvement of users: principles and methods

Guidance is an *individual process* that takes place in a social and economic context. It supports individuals in their pathways that can be defined as successive events and positions hold throughout life. Key principles include:

- *The centrality of the beneficiary:* Entitlements to guidance are clearly defined and transparent to citizens. The guidance support to the beneficiaries is provided throughout the lifespan, through the range of learning, work, societal and personal transitions they undertake.
- *Active involvement:* Continuing improvement in the design and implementation of guidance services is promoted through citizen/user involvement and regular citizen feedback as well as the application of citizen entitlements.
- *Accessibility:* The guidance provided is accessible in a flexible and user-friendly way and is available at times and in places that suit citizens' needs; the role of ICT in reaching out to citizens at a time and best place suited to their needs provides new customer relations management systems.
- *Empowerment:* The need for citizens to cope with diverse challenges throughout their lives, including more frequent career changes, requires individuals to become competent at managing their learning and career pathway and have highly developed career management skills (CMS), especially at times of high rates of unemployment and intensified job insecurity.

The development of CMS implies, inter alia:

- A CMS framework defining the competences needed by the citizens of all ages in order to manage their career in a lifelong perspective.
- Strategies to widen access to CMS provision, to assure its quality.
- Implementation of pedagogical strategies and resources enabling individuals to achieve mastery of career management competences.
- Evaluation, assessment and accreditation of such competences throughout life: the use of portfolios and of the (future) European Skills Passport.
- Promoting CMS as a tool for flexicurity policies: securing pathways for employed and unemployed people and supporting their transitions through the development of CMS in Public Employment Service settings.

3. The support of ELGPN

The aim will continue to be the development of lifelong guidance at European and member country levels as a transversal and cross-cutting policy element in the different sectors (schools, higher education, VET, adult learning, employment, social inclusion and youth policy).

The activities will combine implementation process, operational approach and thematic reflection on broad strategic issues:

- At member country level, the focus will be **on the adaptation, field testing and application of the Resource Kit in each member country** with the support of **Policy Review Clusters** relating to the previous ELGPN themes (CMS, Access, Co-ordination/Co-operation, Quality), so ensuring the continuity of the different phases of the ELGPN work in the light of the priorities of the 2008 Resolution. Within the four themes, specific issues will be deepened and the outputs will be fed into the updating/completion of the Resource Kit. Review/reflection meetings will take place to assist the implementation process at national level.
- **Thematic Task Groups will explore strategic issues** such as collecting existing evidence on the impact of career development services in all sectors, co-operation on OECD surveys, production of policy briefings on EU policy developments, and exploring the development of a European Framework for Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems Development.
- The third type of activity is more operational: the **Policy Review Clusters** and the **Thematic Task Groups** will be invited to develop operational policy aspects regarding quality and effectiveness of lifelong guidance in all sectors.

APPENDIX

1. 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* which calls for close co-operation between Public Employment Services and education and training guidance systems and more integrated guidance and counselling services, including accessible and targeted guidance services providing additional support at key transitions points, especially for learners at risk of under-achievement.
2. The Council Recommendation on *Policies to Reduce Early School Leaving* (7 June 2011) which sets a common European framework for effective and efficient policies against early school-leaving, including guidance to support students' career choices and transitions.
3. The Council Recommendation *Youth on the Move – Promoting the Learning Mobility of Young People* (28 June 2011) which focuses on the quality of information and guidance about opportunities for learning mobility, including guidance to mobile learners, in particular concerning the recognition of learning outcomes acquired through mobility experiences.
4. The Council conclusions on *The Modernisation of Higher Education* (adopted at the Education Council on 28 November 2011) which underline the crucial role of higher education to boost growth and economy and recommend 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.
5. The Council Resolution on *A Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning* (adopted by the Ministers of Education at the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council on 28 November 2011) which points to information and guidance as the means of making people aware and motivated, in particular the low-skilled.
6. *The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion* which asserts that the fight against poverty and exclusion needs to rely on growth and employment as well as on effective social protection that must be combined with a broad set of social policies including targeted education and training, and thus guidance.

The Communication from the Commission on *Action for Stability, Growth and Jobs* of (30 May 2012) which stresses the necessity of fighting youth unemployment, tapping the potential of new sources of jobs in the green economy, services, energy sectors, tourism, and the digital economy, and recommends active guidance from Public Employment Services, and more individualised support for job-seekers. .



CYPRUS PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE EUROPEAN UNION



Annex 3

Draft Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies

Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 21 November 2008 on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies

(2008/C 319/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

CONSIDERING THAT:

1. The growing globalisation of trade and lengthening of the period of active employment are increasingly requiring individuals to adapt their skills, in order to remain ahead of foreseeable or necessary changes and to safeguard their career paths.
2. The enlargement of the European Union has increased the potential for mobility in education and training, as well as in the labour market, thereby creating the need to prepare Union citizens to develop their learning and professional pathways in a broader geographical context.
3. Citizens' lives are increasingly characterised by multiple transitions: notably from school to vocational education and training (VET), higher education or employment, or from employment to unemployment, further training or departure from the labour market. Guidance plays a decisive role in the major decisions that individuals have to take throughout their lives. In this respect, it can contribute to empowering individuals to manage their own career paths in a more secure way in the context of today's labour market, and to achieve a better balance between their personal and professional lives.
4. The labour market is also characterised by the mismatch between persistent unemployment and difficulties in recruiting in certain sectors, and guidance provides a means of responding more effectively to labour market needs.
5. Social inclusion and equal opportunities are still major challenges for education, training and employment policies,

CONFIRM:

the definition of guidance as referring to a continuous process that enables citizens at any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which those capacities and competences are learned and/or used. Guidance covers a range of individual and collective activities relating to information-giving, counselling, competence assessment, support, and the teaching of decision-making and career management skills.

RECALL THAT:

1. the Council Resolution of 28 May 2004 ⁽¹⁾ on strengthening policies, systems and practices in the field of guidance throughout life sets out the key objectives of a lifelong guidance policy for all European Union citizens;
2. the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning ⁽²⁾ underlines, with reference to several key competences, that the ability to search for the education and training opportunities and guidance and/or support available is essential for an individual's personal fulfilment, professional development and social integration;
3. the Council Resolution of 15 November 2007 on new skills for new jobs ⁽³⁾ invites the Member States and the Commission to equip people for new jobs within the knowledge society by providing them with vocational guidance, which should enable jobseekers to identify the competence modules required to move to new jobs where there are skills gaps;
4. the 2008 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the work programme 'Delivering lifelong learning for knowledge, creativity and innovation' ⁽⁴⁾ notes that 'particular attention must also be given to lifelong guidance';
5. the Council conclusions of 25 May 2007 on a coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training ⁽⁵⁾ are an important tool for assessing implementation of the goals set by the Lisbon Strategy and thus for monitoring the progress made by Member States in the area of guidance in their lifelong learning strategies;
6. the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning ⁽⁶⁾ creates a common reference framework designed to serve as a translation device between different qualifications systems and their levels. That framework should facilitate workers' mobility and help make guidance part and parcel of Member States' education and employment policies and practices;

⁽¹⁾ Doc. 9286/04.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 290, 4.12.2007, p. 1.

⁽⁴⁾ Doc. 5723/08.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 311, 21.12.2007, p. 13.

⁽⁶⁾ OJ C 111, 6.5.2008, p. 1.

7. the Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on adult learning ⁽¹⁾ point to the economic, social and individual benefits generated by strengthening adult learning and stress that it is the responsibility of government to establish quality information and guidance systems which are more person-centred, so that, fairly and equitably, individuals can become more active and independent learners.

NOTE THAT:

1. recent evaluation reports, in particular that by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) in 2008 on the implementation of the Resolution of 2004, stress that although progress has been made, more efforts are needed in order to improve the quality of guidance services, provide fairer access focused on individuals' needs and aspirations, and to coordinate and build partnerships between existing forms of guidance provision;
2. in 2007, the Member States set up a European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN), comprising representatives of each Member State which chooses to participate, thus increasing the opportunities for Member States to learn from one another and to cooperate on developing policies, systems and practices in the field of lifelong guidance;
3. the priorities for implementing an active guidance policy under the national lifelong learning strategies need to be confirmed. It is necessary to specify those priorities in the form of activities and to deploy European instruments and tools.

INVITE THE MEMBER STATES TO:

- strengthen the role of lifelong guidance within national lifelong learning strategies in line with the Lisbon Strategy and with the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training,
- where appropriate, carry out reviews of guidance policies and practices at national level,
- make use of the following guiding principles (as detailed under 'Priority Areas' in the Annex hereto), in accordance with national contexts and legislation and with a view to supporting the lifelong career transitions of citizens:

1. encourage the lifelong acquisition of career management skills;
 2. facilitate access by all citizens to guidance services;
 3. develop the quality assurance of guidance provision;
 4. encourage coordination and cooperation among the various national, regional and local stakeholders,
- use the opportunities provided under the Lifelong Learning Programme and the European Structural Funds, in accordance with Member States' priorities.

INVITE THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE COMPETENCES, TO:

1. strengthen European cooperation on lifelong guidance provision, in particular through the ELGPN, with the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme, and in liaison with Cedefop.

In particular:

- enable Member States to share information on their policies and practices, and on their evaluation of both, so that each may benefit from the successes of others,
 - monitor national and European implementation of activities in the four priority areas under this Resolution, using surveys, studies, reports, and peer learning activities including case studies and conferences at European-level,
 - endeavour to ensure that lifelong guidance is more consistent and more tightly dovetailed with the various European policy areas and in particular with those of employment and social inclusion,
 - consider whether more evidence-based policy on guidance should be developed at European level;
2. provide citizens and guidance stakeholders with reliable information resources which comprehensively cover Member States' education and training systems and guidance services, in particular via the Euroguidance network;
 3. foster the development of lifelong guidance in third countries in accordance with the four priority areas outlined in this Resolution, in particular through the activities of the European Training Foundation.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 140, 6.6.2008, p. 10.

ANNEX

PRIORITY AREAS**PRIORITY AREA 1: ENCOURAGE THE LIFELONG ACQUISITION OF CAREER MANAGEMENT SKILLS**

Career management skills play a decisive role in empowering people to become involved in shaping their learning, training and integration pathways and their careers. Such skills, which should be maintained throughout life, are based on key competences, in particular 'learning to learn', social and civic competences — including intercultural competences — and a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship. Career management skills include the following, particularly during periods of transition:

- learning about the economic environment, businesses and occupations,
- being able to evaluate oneself, knowing oneself and being able to describe the competences one has acquired in formal, informal and non-formal education settings,
- understanding education, training and qualifications systems.

To make progress in this priority area, Member States should, depending on their specific situations, consider:

- including teaching and learning activities which foster the development of career management skills in general, vocational and higher education programmes,
- preparing teachers and trainers to conduct such activities and support them in this task,
- encouraging parents to become involved in guidance issues,
- involving civil society organisations and the social partners more closely in this area,
- facilitating access to information about training opportunities and their links to the professions, and about the skills needs anticipated in a given locality,
- developing career management skills in adult training programmes,
- making guidance one of the objectives of schools, VET providers and higher education establishments. Integration into working life and the operation of the local, national and European labour markets are aspects, in particular, that should be taken into account.

PRIORITY AREA 2: FACILITATE ACCESS BY ALL CITIZENS TO GUIDANCE SERVICES

Guidance services, as services of general interest, should be accessible to everyone, irrespective of their knowledge base or their initial skills, and should be readily understandable and relevant. A particular effort should be made to improve access to guidance services for the most disadvantaged groups and persons with special needs.

To make progress in this priority area, Member States should, depending on their specific situations, consider:

- actively promoting guidance services with the public and raise their profile using the full range of information and communication media,
- offering a clear range of easily accessible services based on an evaluation of people's aspirations and needs, and taking account of their living and working environments,
- enabling people to benefit from support in obtaining validation and recognition on the labour market of their formal, non-formal and informal learning outcomes, in order to safeguard their employment and maintain their employability, in particular during the second part of their careers,
- promoting open access to documentary resources, the provision of support in information searches, individual counselling and institutional provision.

PRIORITY AREA 3: DEVELOP QUALITY ASSURANCE IN GUIDANCE PROVISION

The development of high quality guidance services is a goal shared by the Member States.

To make progress in this priority area, Member States should, depending on their specific situations, consider:

- improving the quality and ensure the objectivity of career information and advice, while taking account of users' expectations and labour market realities,
- ensuring that the information presented, advice given and support provided are tailored to suit the various different users,
- developing tools for the forward-planning of jobs and skills, building on both national resources and on the Union's common resources, in particular Cedefop,

- relating information on training provision and the operation of the labour market to the local area,
- enhancing, including through initial education and further training, the professional profile and standards of guidance practitioners, and promoting their competences and skills, in particular with regard to the provision of information, counselling and support, in order to better respond to the needs and expectations of both citizens and policymakers,
- measuring the effectiveness of guidance provision, where appropriate by collecting reliable data covering both users' perception of guidance services and the benefits obtained by them in the medium term,
- developing quality standards for guidance services which define the service provided and which pay as much attention to the goals and results for the beneficiary as to methods and processes.

PRIORITY AREA 4: ENCOURAGE COORDINATION AND COOPERATION AMONG THE VARIOUS NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

Guidance caters for different segments of the population: pupils, university entrants, job-seekers, those in vocational training and those in employment, which gives rise to differing systems. There should be greater complementarity and coordination between the different areas, with national and local government, businesses, relevant agencies, the social partners and local communities collaborating to improve the efficiency of reception networks accessible to everyone seeking guidance.

To make progress in this priority area, Member States should, depending on their specific situations, consider:

- developing effective, long-term national and regional mechanisms for coordination and cooperation among the key stakeholders in lifelong guidance provision,
 - facilitating such coordination and cooperation by developing a guidance dimension within national lifelong learning and labour market strategies, in keeping with the concept which each Member State has adopted,
 - supporting a partnership policy and the local networking of lifelong guidance services, including by pooling services wherever this proves effective, in the interests of streamlining user access,
 - developing a common culture, including by means of quality assurance, among the various services responsible at local, regional and national levels.
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