

ELGPN Plenary and Policy Review Meetings, Athens, Greece (19-20 February 2014) and Zagreb, Croatia (11-12 June 2014)

The 14th ELGPN Plenary Meeting and the 4th Policy Review Meeting were held in Athens, Greece on 19-20 February 2014. The meeting was organised by the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP), a supervised body of the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, in co-operation with the ELGPN. The meeting was attended by 107 delegates from 32 countries, including observers Switzerland and Serbia. Representatives of ELGPN partner (Cedefop and ETF), parallel organisations (EAIE, ICCDPP and the PES Network) and the European Commission (DG EAC and DG EMPL) also participated in the meeting.

Ms Fotini Vlachaki (Director of Career Guidance at EOPPEP) welcomed the participants to Athens. She introduced the EOPPEP and its multiple roles in lifelong guidance. Ms Vlachaki also conveyed the greetings and a welcome message from the Deputy Minister of the Education and Religious Affairs, Mr Konstantinos Gioulekas, and from the CEO of EOPPEP, Mr John Voutsinas.

The meeting also received briefings from Mr Koen Nomden (European Commission DG EAC), Ms Barbora Novotna (European Commission DG EMPL) and from Dr Susanne Kraatz who also announced that this was her last ELGPN meeting. She thanked the Network for good co-operation with DG EMPL and with herself since 2009 and acknowledged the good progress made in the ELGPN member countries and in the PRCs during the last year, encouraging the Network and its member countries to continue their important work. Ms Novotna will continue as the DG EMPL representative in the ELGPN. Dr Wolfgang Muller (PES Network) spoke about the PES 2020 Strategy and strategic development within the HoPES Network and Ms Antje Barabasch (Cedefop) briefed the meeting participants on a recent Cedefop study on Guidance support for mid-life career transitions.

At the end of the meeting, Ms Mirjana Zecirevic (Head of Employment Preparation Department, Croatian Employment Service) invited ELGPN members to the 15th ELGPN Plenary Meeting and 5th Policy Review Meeting to be held in Zagreb, Croatia on 11–12 June 2014.



ELGPN members gathered for the 14th ELGPN Plenary Meeting and 4th Policy Review Meeting in Athens in February 2014. (Photo: Fotini Vlachaki)

The presentations and photographs from the meeting can be found at the ELGPN website <http://www.elgpn.eu/meetings/meetings-2013-2014/joint-14th-elgpn-plenary-and-4th-policy-review-meeting>.

The 15th ELGPN Plenary Meeting and the 5th Policy Review Meeting were held in Zagreb, Croatia on 11-12 June 2014. The meeting attended by 97 delegates was jointly organised by the Ministry of Labour and Pension System and the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia and the Croatian Employment Service, in co-operation with the ELGPN.

Ms Sanja Crnković Pozaić, chief adviser to the Minister of Labour and Pension System, welcomed the meeting participants to Zagreb. In her address, she emphasised the importance of lifelong guidance in providing the “oil” to make the education and labour-market systems work, and of ELGPN’s work in facing the challenges of using human potential. Ms Ana Gorsic, Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, reported that a new initiative had been launched in the previous week, with the aim of creating a national council for the development of guidance services.

In her presentation, Ms Mirjana Zečirević (Assistant Director General, Croatian PES), gave an overview of recent developments in lifelong guidance (LLG) policy in Croatia. She noted the high university dropout rate, highlighted by the Commission country-specific recommendations: this emphasised the importance of guidance in schools and universities. She also reported on the newly established CISOK Lifelong Career Guidance Centres, located outside existing services, and based on partnerships of employment, education and support services.

The Plenary Meeting discussed the structure of the forthcoming European Guidelines for Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems Development and the main elements of the ELGPN 2015 Work Programme. The Policy Review Clusters also met to review and discuss progress made in the member countries in the implementation of the Work Programme.



ELGPN family photo from the 15th Plenary Meeting and 5th Policy Review Meeting held in Zagreb, Croatia. Photo: Toni Primorac

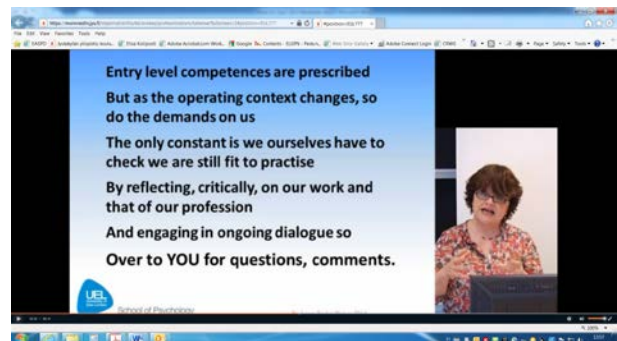
Ms Keiri Becherelli and Ms Concetta Fonzo presented the priorities for the forthcoming Italian EU Council Presidency. They invited ELGPN members and partner organisations to attend the 16th ELGPN Plenary Meeting and 6th Policy Review Meeting which would be held in Rome, Italy on 21-22 October 2014, and the 5th European Conference on Lifelong Guidance Policies to be held in Rome on 20 October 2014.

The presentations and photographs from the meeting can be found at the ELGPN website <http://www.elgpn.eu/meetings/5th-elgpn-policy-review-meeting>

International webinars related to the ELGPN 2013-14 Work Programme

The ELGPN Co-ordination Unit, in co-operation with the National Centre for Lifelong Guidance Expertise at the Finnish Institute for Educational Research at the University of Jyväskylä, organised three webinars with links to the ELGPN 2013-14 Work Programme.

In the first webinar held on 19 February 2014, Professor Jim Sampson from the Florida State University examined the use of Information and Communication Technologies in the delivery of career interventions. Topics presented included the benefits and limitations in using ICT in delivering career interventions, the role of the practitioner and the role of ICT, the influence of practitioners' scope of practice, career guidance systems, career assessment, career information, distance career counseling, social media, mobile technology, applications (apps) and games, virtual career centers, integrated ICT-based career resources and services, and ethical issues and professional standards. This webinar will feed the discussions in the Italian EU Presidency Conference on Guidance Policy Development to be held in Rome, Italy on 20 October 2014.



Professor Rachel Mulvey spoke about professionalism of the career workforce in an ELGPN webinar on 24 April 2014

In her presentation on 24 April 2014, Professor Rachel Mulvey from the University of East London reflected on the competences career professionals need to do an effective job. In doing so she asked what is considered effective as a career intervention. She examined questions about the nature and purpose of career support in the current economic and social context. Professor Mulvey argued that the career workforce across Europe comprises of a number of professional roles with some variation in specialist know-how and concluded that, nevertheless, professionalism is the common factor which

binds the careers workforce in its practice.

The first global webinar on the Evidence Base in Career Guidance was jointly organized by International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) in co-operation with the ELGPN and ICCDPP (International Centre for Career Development) on April 30, 2014.

Dr Tristram Hooley described the rationale to support policy makers in achieving a greater level of understanding of the evidence base in lifelong guidance. He outlined the process undertaken by the ELGPN in developing the Evidence Guide, highlighted key findings and set out a series of key evidence based principles that should inform lifelong guidance policy and practice. Following Dr. Hooley's presentation, four internationally-recognised career guidance leaders - Peter Tatham (Australia), Scott Solberg (USA), Lynne Bezanson (Canada), and John McCarthy (ICCDPP) – responded to his presentation with proposals for further research and international co-operation in this area.

All three webinars are available at the ELGPN website <http://elgpn.eu/webinars>. The Evidence Base webinar with background materials is also available at the IAEVG website <http://www.iaevg.org>.

Conference “Psychologists in the Schools: Challenges for Research and Intervention”, 11-12 April 2014, Coimbra, Portugal

by *Maria Paula Paixão*

The Portuguese conference “Psychologists in the Schools: Challenges for Research and Intervention” was held at the University of Coimbra on 11-12 April 2014.

The conference celebrated the 30th anniversary of psychology as a profession in the public education system in Portugal. It also gathered the professionals in an in-depth discussion of the challenges they currently face in their main areas of intervention in the school context in a globalized world. These include the following: to provide career guidance and counselling to adolescents and young adults; to consult with educators and other professionals regarding the students' cognitive, affective, social and behavioural performance; to assess developmental needs and to develop educational environments that meet those

diverse needs; to co-ordinate educational, psychological and behavioural health services by working at the interface of these systems.

The third goal of the conference was to bring together researchers (working mainly at the higher education level) and the professionals working in basic and secondary education, in order to foster the quality of school interventions and their articulation with the professionals' training and supervision.



The Portuguese school psychologists gathered for an anniversary conference in Coimbra in April 2014. Photo: David Rute

The Conference was attended by circa 100 school psychologists, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Education and students' parents. The conference contained several key-note speeches, roundtables, as well as poster presentations. The importance of promoting lifelong guidance policies resulting from consolidated partnerships between the school and the employment contexts was strongly underlined by all the participants. This urgent message was also clearly stated by the ELGPN Coordinator, Dr Raimo Vuorinen, who participated in the conference via a video link. The participants agreed on the need to disseminate a set of guidelines concerning the development of a coherent strategy for delivering lifelong access to evidence-based guidance and counselling services in the diverse school context in Portugal.

The 1st Biennale on Validation of Prior Learning (VPL), 9-11 April 2014, Rotterdam, the Netherlands

The 1st Biennale on Validation of Prior Learning (VPL) was organised in Rotterdam, Netherlands on 9-11 April 2014. The aim of the biennale was to create a platform for policy makers, practitioners, users, researchers and all other stakeholders interested in further developing and implementing VPL in their practice. The programme provided an update on the forthcoming European Guidelines on VPL.

One of the themes was the role of lifelong guidance in the validation processes.



In his keynote address Director Pierre Mairesse of DG EAC, European Commission (on the right) presented the European perspective on the Validation of non-formal and informal learning. Photo: Erik van Beek

The presentations and conclusions of the sessions are available on the biennale website, <http://vplbiennale.com>

"Towards a European Area of Skills and Qualifications", 17 June 2014, Brussels, Belgium

A conference titled "Towards a European Area of Skills and Qualifications" was organised by the European Commission in Brussels, Belgium on 17 June 2014. The conference was a starting point for reflection on the results of the public consultation and the Eurobarometer survey on the European Area of Skills and Qualifications (EASQ). The conference discussed whether the existing European tools for the transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications are fit for purpose, and whether there is scope to make them simpler and easier to understand by learners, workers and employers.

Of special interest to the guidance community are two findings highlighted in the Result of the Public Consultation document:

- The findings indicate that “[t]here [is] a strong agreement on the importance of high quality and independent guidance services at all levels of education and employment, including from early stages, in order to reduce early school leaving or drop out and to foster employability. Labour market actors should have an active role in the provision of guidance services to help overcome skills mismatches.”

- The consultation “[r]espondents also pointed to the essential role of guidance and guidance services in promoting access to relevant information...”

Currently only a few Europeans are aware of the different EU mobility tools (e.g. only 3% are aware of EURES), and 45% have never used LLG services, largely because of lack of access.

The EASQ should also pursue coherence, simplification, ease of use, transparency and understanding of the current tools, not least by ensuring that the same terminology is used across the tools. The relationship and synergies between the tools should be clear, and where necessary the governance of each tool should be reviewed, ensuring the representation of stakeholders. The focus should be on individuals as the end-users of the tools. The users can be reached by more effective communication, and availability of information, guidance and training.

More information about the results of the public consultation and the conference presentations can be found at the conference website <https://conference-easq.teamwork.fr/en/programme>

IAEVG Annual Conference 2014: “At the intersection of personal, community and worklife realities”

The IAEVG annual conference entitled “At the intersection of personal, community and worklife realities” was held in Québec, Canada on June 4 - 6, 2014.

More than 1250 delegates were registered for the conference and more than 200 symposia, workshops, papers, communications and posters were presented. The conference presentations can be accessed at the conference website, <http://aiospcongres2014-quebec.ca/>

The 2015 IAEVG International Conference will be held in Tsukuba, Japan on 18-21 September 2015. The conference theme is "Restructuring Careers Over Unexpected Powerful Forces." For more information, please see <http://www.iaevgconf2015.jp/>

The 7th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy, Des Moines, USA, 14-17 June 2015

The 6th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy held in Budapest, Hungary on 5-7 December 2011 invited the ELGPN to strengthen the links between its member countries and parallel international initiatives in lifelong guidance policy development. The strong collaborative structures and processes within ELGPN could be enriched by practices from countries outside Europe, for mutual benefit. Such links could include, but extend beyond, global sharing of ELGPN publications and tools – recognising that good practice is based on sharing learning, not importing models. The 7th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy will be held in Des Moines, Iowa, on 14-17 June 2015. The Symposium organisers will send invitations to national delegations in early autumn 2014.

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The Co-ordination Unit staff would like to thank all ELGPN members, partners and consultants for their hard work in the first half of 2014 and wish everyone a sunny and relaxing summer break.

Summer greetings from Jyväskylä



Photo: Outi Ruusuvirta

Please note that the ELGPN Co-ordination Unit is closed for a summer break on 14-25 July 2014.

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