



euro | guidance  
European Network to Support  
Guidance and Counselling

# Euroguidance Insight

November 2011

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## Short news

### Euroguidance survey

The Euroguidance working group "Mobility" plans to develop tools which support European mobility. A survey is currently being carried out in order to determine the training needs of counsellors who work in the field of mobility guidance. We invite you to complete the online questionnaire which is accessible on the following website:

<http://svy.mk/tYwsmb>

Deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2011

### New Swiss EG Centre

Since January 2011 the Swiss Euroguidance Centre has been located within the Swiss Competence Centre for Exchange and Mobility, from the Ch Foundation for Federal Cooperation. The centre's main goal is to support contact between specialists in educational and vocational guidance services. In this regard, they get promotion to increase their mobility and help to take advantage of different opportunities in Europe. For more information, please have a look at

[www.ch-go.ch/euroguidance](http://www.ch-go.ch/euroguidance)

or send an email to [euroguidance@chstiftung.ch](mailto:euroguidance@chstiftung.ch)

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## Onisep/AGEFA: Call for participation - A Stay in Paris will be the reward

The European Commission supports activities for entrepreneurship, the enhancement of creativity and innovation dedicated to pupils and students. ONISEP, one of the French Euroguidance centres, and AGEFA, a professional body representing SMEs in the domain of vocational training and apprenticeship, are organizing an international competition with the aim to get closer contact to schools and companies.

The objective is to improve the mutual knowledge of schools and enterprises, to develop a multidisciplinary commitment of the educational teams and to assess the entrepreneurial spirit in young people. Participants will be required to produce a digital document and present it in the way a company would integrate

a preliminary market and competition study into the process of designing a product or a new service. Proposals can be delivered in five languages: English, French, German, Spanish and Italian before April 28, 2012.

A jury will check and assess them. A stay in Paris from June 27 till July 2, 2012, will be the reward for the winner. More information and the proposals of previous years can be seen here: [www.onisep.fr/concours](http://www.onisep.fr/concours) or [www.agefa-pedagogie.org](http://www.agefa-pedagogie.org)

We kindly ask the guidance professionals of the various European countries to disseminate this information to schools, vocational training institutions and to their networks.

*Graziana Boscato, Euroguidance  
Strasbourg/France*

## eGuidance in Denmark: Service Improves Contact to the Client

In January 2011 the Ministry of Education launched a new guidance service and established it as part of the Danish guidance portal [www.ug.dk](http://www.ug.dk). Every person in Denmark who seeks information on education will get guidance from experienced counsellors via various communication channels (hotline, chat, email or sms) every day of the week. Please read the following interview with the manager of eGuidance, Kirsten Hahn Larsen, about the first results after 10 months in action.

### *Mrs. Hahn-Larsen, how is eGuidance organised in Denmark?*

We are part of the Danish Ministry of Education and located in an agency called UNI-C. We have 37 employees; 12 of them work full time for eGuidance.



Kirsten Hahn Larsen

Furthermore we have a large group of colleagues who work part-time for eGuidance. They are employed in other guidance units (Youth Guidance Centres, Regional Guidance Centres or Job Centres) and work for eGuidance between 40 to 60 % of their time, which is about 2-3 work days per week. In this way we can maintain close communications and co-operation with the numerous guidance centres we have throughout Denmark.

This is of course a management challenge but it provides an incredibly good synergy between the different ways of working.

### *Who are your target groups and how do they find you?*

We provide guidance in education for everyone. The target groups can roughly be divided into young people in lower secondary schools who are about to make their next choice after the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> year of school; adolescents in upper secondary education who will choose among higher education offers and adults seeking continuing education and training or who wish to choose a programme within the higher education system.

Those who seek guidance find us through UG.dk but also via our new app. Besides, information about our offers is available in primary schools and in youth education institutions.

### *What are your first experiences?*

Now we know how it works. For instance chatting on the Internet is a relatively new tool within the guidance field. Almost 50 % of our sessions are via the chat, which has made us pretty experienced in guiding people this way. As a result we are now developing a methodology of guidance via the chat. We have also realised that the chat is a unique guidance tool. People can address us exactly when they want to and abandon the conversation if they do not wish to continue.

## Short news

### **New ICT Tools for Counsellors**

The Polish Euroguidance Centre for Education created two ICT tools for guidance counsellors in 2009. Both tools are based on the platform Moodle.

### **Educational Virtual Space (EVS)**

addresses counsellors working in educational institutions such as schools or psychological-pedagogical centres. Users must have at least basic IT skills, adhere to the rules and the e-contract. Use of the tool is free. The main idea for creating EVS was to allow guidance counsellors room for interaction and cooperation. Via EVS they can exchange their work experience, knowledge and opinions. They can discuss methodological topics suggested by users or the moderator and develop a common methodological solution (moderators are members of the EG Poland team):

<http://bit.ly/uFOsPF>

**An online-training on cultural diversity** was created due to the increasing number of immigrants in Poland. Immigrants need support in both the education and labour sector. This is a relatively new task for guidance counsellors. The aim was to prepare them for working with pupils and students who come from a different cultural background. The training was designed for counsellors who work in schools or psychological-pedagogical centres, for example. Having completed the training participants are able to recognise and define areas of difficulties for immigrants and to characterise cultural values, which are important for immigrants during the decision-making process.

**Anna Dzedzic/Marta Łuczak**  
**Euroguidance Poland**  
**(education)**

### ***Were you inspired by other countries?***

When setting up the eGuidance services in Denmark we have been inspired by other countries, i.e. Learn Direct in the UK and the experiences made in Sweden. We have recently shared our experiences with the members of a working group within the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, and next year we will give a presentation to the Nordic Baltic Euroguidance Centres.

### ***Where do you see challenges?***

We are currently developing further channels of guidance. We have decided to try guidance via social media and have chosen Face-book for this project. This entails challenges and experiences, which are completely different from working with tradition-al channels.

Links: [www.ug.dk/evejledning.aspx](http://www.ug.dk/evejledning.aspx)  
or <http://en.iu.dk/euroguidance>

***Birthe Theu, Euroguidance Denmark  
conducted the interview***

## **Cross Border Seminar: May 2011 in Budapest**

This year Euroguidance Hungary hosted the annual cross-border seminar called "Innovative Tools and Methods in Career Guidance and Counselling" which took place on 17-18<sup>th</sup> May in Budapest.

The cross-border cooperation, which prepared the seminar in terms of content, was founded in 2005 with three Euroguidance centres (Austria, Czech and Slovak Re-public). At present four more Euroguidance Centres (Germany, Slovenia, Poland and Hungary) are participating. The main objective of the cross-border cooperation is to organise seminars for guidance practitioners and policy makers to provide them with a wide range of topics related to their professional fields.

In 2011 Hungary took over the task of organising the cross-border seminar particularly with regard to the Hungarian EU Presidency. The seminar was focused on innovative and practical tools and methods used in career guidance and counselling. As usual each participating country sent a workshop leader who contributed to one of the major topics offered: innovative ICT tools used in career guidance and counselling, new psychological

psychological methods and new counselling concepts and practices. 65 participants attended the initial plenary session where guidance as a profession was explained from the Hungarian point of view. Delegates chose from parallel workshops led by international experts. The closing plenary session touched on the recent European issues on lifelong guidance and counselling and presented a summary of each workshop. The full programme and documents of each plenary session and workshop are available on the following website, as well as the compendium, which contains the description of each workshop. The participating countries also contributed to a national survey relating to the topics of the cross-border seminar. It is also on this site: <http://bit.ly/sPlo2V>

The cross-border cooperation will continue its work with new countries joining the group. The host of next year's seminar will be Euroguidance Slovenia.

***Ágnes Cserkúti, Euroguidance Hungary***

## **Short news**

### **Euroguidance Centre in Croatia**

Since January 2011 the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes has been acting as Croatia's new Euroguidance centre. Its main activities will be targeted at guidance counsellors in the employment sector and their counterparts in the educational system. The centre's main goal is to help develop their competence by information on current developments in the field of lifelong guidance, guidance and counselling practices in Europe and on mobility opportunities through the EU programmes. Still, the task to ensure that everyone interested in education and training abroad will have access to information on learning mobility opportunities in Europe has priority.



***Dragana Glivetic, Project Officer***

The Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes is likewise the National Agency and therefore responsible for the implementation of both the Lifelong-Learning Programme and Youth-in-Action Programme in Croatia. Funded in 2007, the Agency is also responsible for the promotion and implementation of other EU programmes and initiatives: Euro-pass, Eurodesk, Euraxess and Erasmus Mundus. For more information, please contact us:

[euroguidance@mobilnost.hr](mailto:euroguidance@mobilnost.hr)

# Interview with Prof. Ronald Sultana: “Guidance is a Political Activity”



Professor Ronald Sultana is Director of the Euro-Mediterranean Centre for Educational Research at the University of Malta and a well-known expert in the field of career guidance. His interest in career guidance began quite early. He was still at school when he knew a career guidance counsellor whom he admired a lot. He wanted to be like him when he grew up. In 1982 he started to study career guidance and counselling at the Reading University in England.

Having finished his studies, he initially worked as a guidance counsellor at Maltese schools. Shortly afterwards he went to New Zealand in order to write his Ph.D. on a subject very closely related to career guidance, namely on the “transition from school to work”.

Sultana’s first involvement in guidance on an international level was a project organised by one of the European Commission’s agencies, the Turin-based *European Training Foundation* which started when Malta was about to join the European Union. This project invited one expert from each of the 11 candidate and accession countries to write a report about the situation of career guidance in the respective countries. Professor Sultana was asked to write a synthesis of all the eleven reports which catapulted him into the career guidance international arena.

## **Professor Sultana, has there been anyone who influenced your professional life?**

Yes, there was Abel Giglio, one of the pioneers of career guidance in Malta and President of the Malta Union of Teachers. He was a person I had very much looked up to. Tony Watts is another one to be mentioned. He is an internationally renowned expert in career guidance and Professor at the Cambridge University. Tony liked my approach in career guidance, which takes into regard both the sociological and psychological insights. We worked together in several projects in the last decade. He has become very important in my life in terms of being an academic mentor whose work I read and use.

## **Being an internationally known expert, you have published several books. What book are you proud of the most?**

It is the book “Education and National Development” which is a study on vocational education. I really put my heart and soul into this piece of work. It took me five years to write it. I did a lot of research, i.e. historical and field work inclusively surveys and interviews. I am also quite proud of

a volume called “Inside/Outside Schools: Towards a Critical Sociology of Education in Malta”. Together with a group of students I analyzed various aspects of life in Maltese schools from the perspectives of equity and social justice.

Internationally, it is the series of studies I carried out in developing countries, particularly in Palestine which was a rather challenging study.

It made me consider the theoretical approaches in career guidance developed in Western countries with a more critical eye. Here we are talking about a situation where young people and adults have limited choices due to the political and socio-economic situation in their country. Yet, when you try to think of the relevance of career guidance in this situation, you can see the value of opening up pathways and options for young people in that particular context. Here, the link between career guidance, politics and power is very visible. It makes also clear that guidance is a political activity, and not just a ‘technical’ one in terms of finding the best fit between people and jobs, or in helping people construct their career pathways.

It is much more than that. It is also about challenging structures that promote and reproduce inequalities, and which perpetuate in-justice. Guidance is therefore also advocacy, particularly on behalf of marginalised groups.

## **What is in your view the link between career guidance and lifelong learning?**

There has been a major shift as to how career guidance is looked at to-day. Of course the value of focusing on key transitions is still recognized but often it is also seen that such programmes suffer from the ‘too little, too late’-syndrome.

Nowadays we are rather talking about ‘lifelong guidance’, which is an approach to recognise that people require information, and possibly also advice and guidance throughout their lives.

The reason for this is simple: modern economies – at least in theory – require people to have a number of jobs throughout their lives. This is not true for everybody, because there are a lot of people who find a job and stay in it the rest of their lives, but it is increasingly true for an increasing number of people, and indeed this is one of the key features of the ‘new capitalism’.

The economy works in such a way that it is more and more difficult for a citizen to get a contract for life in a job, mostly because businesses are after flexibility, in order to ensure profits, even if this has serious consequences for the citizen. This is why there is so much rhetoric around the notion of life long education and training. Part of that rhetoric also includes career guidance, since transitions are no longer linear, and are becoming more complex, which means that citizens of all ages stand to gain by having the support of information, advice and guidance throughout their working lives, right into retirement.

***If a politician asked you what investments should be made in career guidance, what would you advise?***

One of the reasons why a government should invest money in providing career guidance services is that it is supposed to help economic development, specifically

in terms of facilitating the match between demand and supply of labour and skills. Moreover, career guidance can help address the problem of early school leaving. It can help young people to find their niche, the course and/or work that they feel is suitable for them, in an environment where they can blossom. I believe that everyone has potential, but sometimes society and its institutions fail to offer the right environment for potential to be actualized.

Guidance can help people find the right environment in order to make sure that young people are motivated to stay on at school, and to benefit from that experience.

However, despite being useful in many areas, we must not over-exaggerate its usefulness, because a lot of the economic issues we have are far beyond the reach of career guidance.

***What advice would you give to guidance counsellors?***

The problem of career guidance services offered in Malta and in many other countries is that most staff have only been in schools and have very little knowledge and experience of the wider world of work. Therefore one of the things could be done is to become more knowledgeable about the world of work by trying to bridge the gap with the world of work through for example short internships in industry, for example, and conducting research to know what is happening in work environments.

The complete interview can be read here: [www.euroguidance.org.mt](http://www.euroguidance.org.mt).

***Reinhard Attard, Euroguidance Malta conducted the interview***

## Slovenia: National coordination point

**The project *National coordination point for lifelong career guidance* was launched in October 2010 with the goal of encouraging professional development in this field. The project is based on guidelines of *operative programme for human resources development (2007-2013)* and is financed with EU funds. The Employment Service of Slovenia will coordinate a variety of activities until the end of project in August 2015.**

As in many other European countries, career guidance, requires development in Slovenia. It is in its infancy and is divided among several fields and institutions. The project aims to improve this situation by trying to achieve the following goals:

**Connect different sectors' policies** in order to achieve higher visibility of career planning and guidance on a policy level as well as in different sectors and institutions.

The project also aims to provide accessible and quality career guidance services in all periods of life and for all target groups.

**Further training possibilities for career counsellors** will be developed and implemented before 2015. These can later be developed into study programme for guidance counsellors. The contents will be formed until the end of 2011 and the training will start in 2012. This training will be open for all career counsellors who wish to further their training in the field of career planning.

**Universal quality standards** will be developed which are applicable to all sectors and institutions. The firstly step relates to

terminology, and the confusion surrounding the definition of the term "guidance". A working group of experts from different fields of career orientation was formed and the group defined approximately 40 terms in the field of career orientation which will be published in a special English-Slovenian dictionary.

**Several promotional activities** will be organised for the target groups, i.e. guidance practitioners and policy makers. Some promotion will be targeted also to end users of lifelong career guidance, informing them about the meaning of lifelong career guidance and its services.

***Staša Bučar Markič and Sabina Škarja MSc, Employment Service of Slovenia***

# Career Learning: Flanders is experimenting with a new concept from the Netherlands

The relatively new concept of “Career Learning” finds itself in a problematic transition from education to the labour market and lifelong learning policy. The idea itself can be attributed to the Dutch researchers Frans Meijers, Marinka Kuipers and J. Bakker and reflects a theoretical concept.

The concept consists of different elements: Young people should be more aware of their intended profession. If they are, they will join into the learning process more actively.

Intended profession and real-job needs prosper best in a very powerful learning environment.

The process of dialogue is crucial in the whole concept. Young people should continue their training while being personally involved in their career pathway.

Self –management of the young person’s future career is essential. The decision for a profession is not a one-time thing, but a recurring situation in a lifelong learning process.

## Tailor-Made Trajectory

Full career counselling begins at an early age at school. Therefore career-directed

thinking has to be taught in schools, where needed young people should be put in a tailor-made guidance trajectory.

The entire education system (vocational education in particular) is experiencing a widespread need for an improved guidance practice for students.

There are three main reasons for this. First, a great number of students lack motivation. Not only is there a high drop-out rate, but also a lack of interest in the field of study chosen, i.e. many who continue their studies only do so to obtain their degree and not because of a true interest in their studies.

Secondly, there is a lack of efficiency in the learning process: Students will put into practice an average of 15% of all theory taught in a course. This is partly due to students not having a solid career vision, rendering them unable to formulate clear

learning requests. The result is a lack of intrinsic motivation towards lessons and subject matter. Thirdly, there is a general need for more and better career guidance because of individualisation within society and flexibilisation within employment relations.

## Internal Dialogue is Essential

A career dialogue is a conversation between a student and a trusted adult. Ideally, this would be a teacher, dean/mentor from the school. Such a dialogue focuses on the explicit dependency between relevant employment experiences students have had, their self-image and their work identity. In this process, it is essential to promote an internal dialogue (focusing on their personal construction of meaning) as well as an external dialogue (focusing on the social meaning of work).

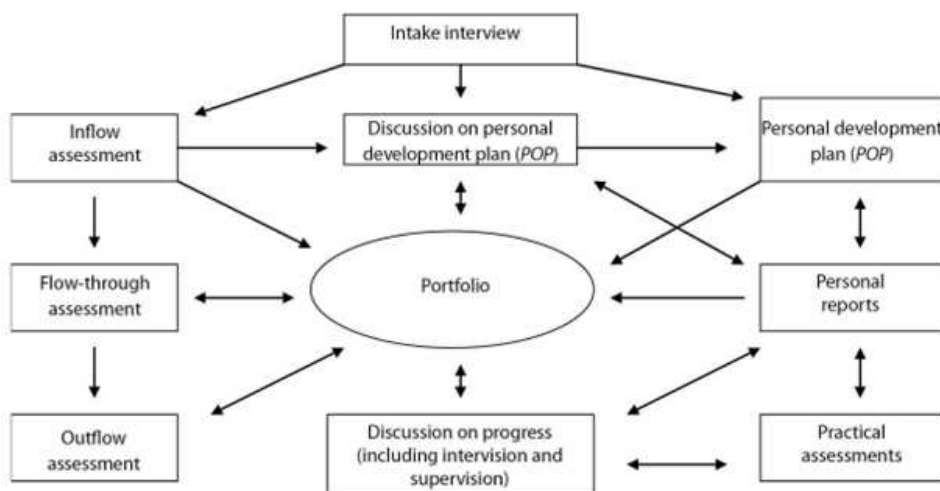
Studies show that a career dialogue at school contributes to the formation of three career competences: career reflection (reflection on qualities and motivation), career formation (job exploration and career guidance) and networking.

## Conclusion

Learning programmes for career development are an additional dimension to institutional strategies designed to foster the employability of students. It makes the value of such strategies transparent to students; it also strengthens the sustainability of their benefits. Learning programmes for career development have not always been strongly present in educational strategies. Over the last few years, however, we have seen a growth in learning programmes for career development within mostly higher education institutions. Their coverage ranges from reaching a minority of students to being extended to larger numbers of students or even been made obligatory.

*Jef Vanraepenbusch and Tanja Biebaut.  
Euroguidance Flanders*

## Scheme on Integrated Career Guidance<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Career guidance: a complex learning process Frans Meijers from Career Learning. Research and practice in education ,Marinka Kuijpers & Frans Meijers (ed.)

## Quality of guidance: Mixed Opinions

**On the request of the European Commission the Gallup Group in Hungary carried out a study on the aspects of guidance. The main purpose with the study was to look at how mobile young people (aged 15 to 35) in Europe are for the purpose of education and work and how they view the attractiveness of different education settings.**

A majority of young adults are satisfied with the counselling received during their education on further possibilities for education and training. About a quarter of was however not satisfied with the advice given. Roughly 1 in 7 young people said that they had not received any advice on higher education studies or that the question was not relevant to their personal situation.

### Main Results

These were the main results of the study. The report also looked at their main concerns when seeking employment and their willingness to set up a business, or move to another country for employment. The report contains a section on the attractiveness of vocational education and training, youth mobility and employment and entrepreneurship.

Young people were somewhat less likely to feel satisfied with the guidance and counseling on employ-

ment opportunities: Roughly a fifth of young people described the guidance and counseling they had received at school as “poor” and almost a tenth said it had been “very poor”.

Nonetheless, almost half of young people answered that the career guidance received at school had been either “satisfactory” or “good”. A minority of 5% said that counseling on future employment opportunities had been “very good”. Finally, 17% of respondents had not received any guidance on employment opportunities or considered the question “not applicable”.

### Country Variations

The proportion of young people who rated the guidance and counseling they had received on further education and training options open to them as “good” or “very good” was the highest in Bulgaria, followed by Finland, Romania and Belgium less than a quarter thought it had been “good” or “very good” in Turkey, Italy, France and

Greece. Respondents in Greece were the most likely to describe the educational advice they had received as “poor” or “very poor”; in Italy, Cyprus and France, more than a third of young people gave such negative ratings. In Turkey, however, a slim majority answered that they had not received any guidance on higher studies or that the question was not relevant to their personal situation.

A similar picture appeared when looking at young people’s satisfaction with guidance and counseling received during their school education on future employment opportunities. Young people in Finland, Belgium and Bulgaria were the most likely to describe the career guidance they had received as “good” or “very good”, while those in France, Ireland, Poland, Cyprus, Greece and Italy were the most likely to describe this guidance as “poor” or “very poor”.

*Peter Deursen, Euroguidance Netherlands*

Youth on the move. Analytical report; full report: <http://bit.ly/iD8gBf>



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