

Lifelong Guidance: A Key to Lifelong Learning – EU Policy Perspective

John McCarthy
European Commission
DG EAC
Vocational Training Policy Unit



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General for Education and Culture
Development of Vocational Training Policy



CURRENT CONTEXT FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Lisbon 2010 Goals: Competitiveness, Social Inclusion, Knowledge-based Economy and Society
- Economic Policy
- Employment Policy
- Social Inclusion Policy
- Education and Training Policy



EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICY

- **Education and Training 2010 Work Programme:**
- 3 Strands: Objectives; Lifelong Learning; Enhanced EU Co-operation in VET
- **OBJECTIVES:** Quality, Access, Openness
- **LIFELONG LEARNING:** Partnership, Learning Culture, Excellence, Insightful Demand for Learning, Access, Resourcing
- **VET:** Transpârency, Quality, Credit Transfer, Non-Formal Learning, Lifelong Guidance, Trainers, European Dimension



Europe 2010: Knowledge Society Competitiveness, Social Cohesion (Lisbon Goals)

- Contribution and adaptation of education and training systems
- Open Method of Coordination
- Work programme: work groups (political), expert groups (technical)
- Council Resolutions and Conclusions (political)
- Inter-ministerial informal conferences and conclusions (political)



Lifelong Guidance: A Key to Lifelong Learning

- What does lifelong career guidance mean?
- Which EU public policy goals does it contribute to?
- Where is career guidance placed in EU policies for education, training and employment?
- What is the current state of policies for career guidance in Europe?
- What actions are taking place at European level?
- What are the characteristics of lifelong career guidance systems?



What Do We Mean by Lifelong Guidance?

Common understanding

- **What?** Activities: e.g. information giving, advice, counselling, assessment, teaching, advocacy
- For whom? All citizens
- **When?** Any age and point in their lives
- **Focus?** Making meaningful life choices on learning and work. Empowerment to manage learning and career
- **Career?** Individual lifepaths in which competences are learned and/or used
- **Where?** Education, training, employment, community, private



Which EU Policy Goals does Career Guidance Serve?

- Efficient investment in education and training
- Labour market efficiency
- Lifelong learning
- Social inclusion
- Social equity
- Economic development



Investing Efficiently in Education and Training: An Imperative for Europe (2003)

- « Investment in guidance services as early prevention strategy, capable of reducing mismatches between education, training and the needs of the labour market, increasing completion rates in secondary and further/higher education, and facilitating the transition to work as well as return to studies...increasing participation in maths, science and technology careers »



Key role of lifelong guidance provision

- Career guidance viewed as a key component of national strategies for the implementation of lifelong learning policies
- Career guidance viewed as a priority area for action at European Union level
- Competence to manage one's learning and career as a key factor in wage differentials in OECD countries (OECD EPA 2002)



Lifelong Learning: Making Lifelong Career Guidance a Reality:

**Findings of OECD, CEDEFOP, ETF and World Bank on Policies for
Career Guidance in Europe (2001-2003)**

- Career guidance policy and systems development
- Quality indicators for career guidance
- Access to career guidance
- Investment in career guidance provision
- Career guidance in tertiary education



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General for Education and Culture
Development of Vocational Training Policy



Lifelong Learning: Making Lifelong Career Guidance a Reality:

**Findings of OECD, CEDEFOP, ETF and World Bank on Policies for
Career Guidance in Europe (2001-2003)**

- European employment strategy
- Workforce competence and mobility development
- European youth policy
- Social inclusion
- Services of general interest



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General for Education and Culture
Development of Vocational Training Policy



Lifelong Learning: A Guiding Principle of Education and Training Policies 2010

- PROGRESS 2001 – 2004
- National strategies for lifelong learning: education and training
- Guidance provision within the strategies: citizen/consumer's role in quality
- Joint Interim Report of the Council and the Commission (Feb 2004): -
- Pace of implementation too slow: 2006 target
- Guidance: strengthening role, quality and co-ordination



European Employment Strategy: Where does guidance fit?

- European Employment Guidelines
- Statements of the Heads of Public Employment Services
- European Social Partners: Framework of Actions for the Lifelong Development of Competences and Qualifications (2002)



Political Action at European level: Irish Presidency Draft Resolution on Guidance for the Council of Ministers of Education (May 2004)

- **PRIORITIES**
- Improving access
- Improving content: refocus on skills to manage learning and work
- Improving quality assurance mechanisms, especially citizen/consumer perspective
- Improving structures for policy and systems development
- Co-operation within Education and Training 2010 framework



Invitations to Action: Member States

- to review existing provision
- -encourage co-operation among providers
- -refocus on learning and career management skills



Invitations to Action: Member States and the Commission

- to build on and use existing structures and instruments
- -to identify areas for further co-operation
- -to ensure maximum return on taxpayers investment from EU funded activities
- -to include gender perspective in policies
- -to review existing training of guidance practitioners
- -to improve evidence collection and base for policymaking
- -to report regularly on progress on these actions within the framework of the Education and Training 2010 programme



Other Actions at European Level: Commission's Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance (Technical) and Objectives Groups G and H (Political)

- Common concepts and principles of lifelong guidance service
- Model framework for lifelong guidance provision
- Indicators on lifelong learning guidance provision
- Meta-criteria for quality - citizen perspective
- Career Guidance: A Manual for Policymakers
- Career guidance and the validation of non-formal and informal learning



Common Principles for Guidance Provision

- Independence
 - Confidentiality
 - Equal opportunities
 - Competent staff
 - Accessibility
 - Appropriateness of methods
 - Continuous improvement
 - Right of redress
 - Friendliness
- Impartiality
 - Transparency
 - Empowering
 - Holistic
 - Availability
 - Continuity
 - Responsiveness
 - Collaboration



Features of Lifelong Career Guidance Systems in Europe

- Co-ordinated policies for career guidance at national/regional level: education, training, employment
- Co-ordinated systems development at national/regional level
- Formal networks/partnership of providers at local level
- New partnership approaches to workplace guidance
- Flexible, accessible and responsive provision



Features of Lifelong Career Guidance Systems in Europe

- Citizen centred principles of provision
- Staff with nationally accredited competences
- Focus on outcomes: developing citizens career management competences
- Focus on accountability: developing the evidence base for policy and systems development decisions
- Quality assurance – citizen perspective
- Europe as the reference field for guidance



Future Actions on Guidance at European level

- Joint Actions Programme 2004: European networks of national fora for guidance
- Work Programme Based on the Irish Presidency Council Resolution on Guidance
- Follow-up of Education and Training 2010 Progress Report
- Building Links with South Eastern Europe

