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PANORAMA

Professionalising career guidance

Practitioner competences and qualification routes in Europe

Cedefop

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The **European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training** (Cedefop) is the European Union's reference centre for vocational education and training. We provide information on and analyses of vocational education and training systems, policies, research and practice.
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Foreword

There is a clear consensus in Europe that high quality guidance and counselling services play a key role in supporting lifelong learning, career management and achievement of personal goals. The shift to lifelong guidance in the Member States can best be supported through European cooperation and by means of partnerships between national and regional authorities, social partners, guidance practitioners in education and employment, and young, adult and senior citizens as service users.

Establishing a coherent and holistic guidance system that is accessible over the whole human lifespan has clear implications for the competences, qualifications and continuous professional development of guidance practitioners. The issues of improving the professional profile and standards of guidance practitioners, and promoting their competences and skills, have been addressed in this report. Appropriate initial and further training of guidance counsellors is crucial as they have a central position in guidance service delivery and development.

Guidance and counselling is undergoing gradual change, resulting from the complex demands placed by the society on career guidance practitioners, their working environments, and client groups becoming more diverse. In the coming years, we may expect career guidance practitioners to become more deeply involved in new areas such as validation of non-formal and informal learning, accreditation of prior learning and prior experiential learning. Moreover, guidance practitioners should become well acquainted with European VET policy initiatives, especially with the European qualifications framework for lifelong learning (EQF), and the European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET). All these new responsibilities will call for continuing professional development as well as continuous demonstration of relevant competences from individual guidance practitioners in the Member States.

This Cedefop supports the Council resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies (Council of the European Union, 2008) that fully acknowledges Cedefop's research work and its leading institutional role in lifelong guidance. The core message of this report is that there is a huge variation across Europe in terms of professional training available, competences and qualifications acquired through such training, roles and functions carried out by guidance practitioners and settings in which guidance services are offered. The report is a valuable reference source, especially for policy- and decision-makers as well as trainers of guidance practitioners in education and employment.

We hope that this report will stimulate future action in the Member States on developing competences and qualifications for career guidance practitioners, as well as reinforcing their role in assuring high quality in service delivery.

Aviana Bulgarelli

Director of Cedefop

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This publication provided valuable input and inspiration for debates at the subsequent Cedefop peer learning event on Quality in career guidance and counselling: towards European frameworks for the training and competence of career guidance practitioners (Thessaloniki, October 2008). Further, this report is part of Cedefop's scientific contribution to the IAEVG conference on Coherence, cooperation and quality in guidance and counselling (Jyväskylä, June 2009).

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Executive summary

The research

This report presents the findings from a Europe-wide study that addressed two purposes:

- to review trends and patterns in training provision for career guidance practitioners;
- to develop a common competence framework for career guidance practitioners in the European Union (EU).

Sections 1 to 4 review current training and qualification systems for career guidance practitioners in Europe. These sections explore the current and changing context of career guidance services, national training systems and emerging trends across Europe. Section 3 focuses on several issues which require attention as provision of training for career guidance practitioners is developed. Section 4 contains case studies which explore, in some depth, recent developments in six countries.

Sections 5 to 7 focus on the competence framework of career guidance practitioners. They explore the concept of competence, the design of the competence framework and suggestions for its use. Section 8 explores ways of moving forward, and links the two strands of the project by relating current and proposed training issues to proposed uses of the competence framework.

The need for training in career guidance skills

The training and competence of career guidance staff make an essential contribution to the development of high-quality career guidance services, essential in meeting the needs of national populations and furthering EU strategic aims. Career guidance services need to be both widely available and able to contribute to a range of client needs from supported self-help through to intensive personalised support. This requires a diverse workforce, frequently operating through devolved and dispersed networks. A range of training options must be matched to various professional and non-professional roles. Training structures should permit progression and lateral movement by all involved in delivering career guidance services, including progression from non-professional to professional roles and movement between sectors. There is a need for a cadre of professional career guidance practitioners in every country who are able to guide, develop and support diversified delivery networks. There is also a need for some career specialists educated at the second and third levels of higher education, to deliver higher-level training courses, undertake research and evaluation nationally, and engage with the international academic community.

Current training provision

Current training provision is very diverse. It reflects national delivery systems, where career guidance practice is frequently a subsidiary element within another main professional role. Training may be mandatory or optional, systematic or ad hoc, and at any level from short uncertified courses to master's degrees. In many countries, training in a related specialism

such as psychology or pedagogy is accepted as an adequate proxy for training in the specific theories and specific methods of career guidance.

Recent policy attention to career guidance has led to a significant increase in specialised training for career guidance practitioners, with some two thirds of EU Member States now offering specialised training at tertiary education level. Use of such training is predominantly by staff working in the education and community sectors, with a smaller proportion of countries providing specialised training at that level for staff within their public employment service.

Emerging issues

This report raises questions about what is 'sufficient' training for a specialised role as a career guidance practitioner, proposing that this should be explored and defined in terms of both level (framed within the terms of the European qualifications framework) and the extent of specialised study of career guidance theory and methods. On the basis of existing provision, there is evidence that the equivalent of one year of full-time higher education, or 60 ECTS credits, is an appropriate benchmark for national debates on the desirable extent of the specialised element within professional training.

Training methodologies are also considered. Some recent training initiatives have made use of distance and e-learning methods, which may support diversity in the workforce by increasing access to training for those unable to attend for institution-based delivery. Practicum is used widely by only a minority of training courses; there needs to be further evaluation of its potential contribution, particularly within initial training. Exposure to labour-market and occupational information is variable. While there is some argument that such a rapidly-changing area needs constant attention within continuing professional development, there also needs to be consideration of the basic concepts to be covered in initial training.

The concept of competence

The European Union addressed the question of defining 'competence' in the context of developing the European qualifications framework (European Parliament, 2008). In anticipation of an accepted definition, the project adopted a definition used in the earlier development stages of the European qualifications framework, which reflects a multifaceted understanding of both knowledge and competence. Propositional knowledge (knowing that), practical knowledge (knowing how) and procedural knowledge (knowing how to be) are all encompassed, and underpin development of a concept of competence that places priority on ethical and reflective practice. The question is raised of whether all competences are 'learnable', or whether staff selection systems should seek to identify innate characteristics essential for achieving competences. This is a question on which there is currently no consensus.

Earlier competence frameworks have brought different approaches to the distinction between core or compulsory, and specialised or optional, elements of competence. Development work undertaken within this project has identified: foundation or transversal competences, which should be exhibited in all professional activities; client-interaction

competences, prominent to the client as delivered directly in communication with them; and supporting competences, which ensure that the facilities, networks and resources needed for service delivery are in place.

The concept of competence applies not only to career guidance practitioners but also to the career self-management competences needed by citizens across the lifespan. Where such competences have been defined, they provide a useful benchmark for the design of career guidance services and of the staff competences needed to support clients' development of their own competences.

The competence framework and its uses

The competence framework comprises six foundation competences, six client-interaction competences and seven supporting competences. The framework has been developed at European level to identify several common main tasks falling within each of the client-interaction and supporting competences, but it also includes indicative statements of 'contexts and conditions' intended to stimulate national and sectoral customisation.

One potential use of the competence framework is to provide descriptors of common-core elements of training. A few countries have moved towards identifying such elements, to be supplemented by sector-specific training modules. This approach has merit in increasing cross-sectoral understanding, dialogue and cooperation, and in increasing the opportunities for staff mobility between sectors. The competence framework also has potential to provide a common reference point on staff activities and competence between policy-makers, practitioners and trainers.

The competence framework has a role in relation to the planning and further development of national training and qualification systems. It also has potential uses in mapping staff roles to service functions, and in defining job specifications. It can support current learning within APEL and continuing professional development systems, and provide a basis for self-assessment and peer learning. For policy-makers, it can provide a framework of necessary elements of career guidance services against which they can map their existing and proposed provision.

Conclusions and recommendations

The report concludes that there remains a considerable need to develop the training available for career guidance staff within diverse networks, including development of a cadre of specialised career guidance practitioners in each country who can support such networks. It is important to study, both nationally and in a Europe-wide context, what forms of training are effective for different career guidance functions. European networks such as the European lifelong guidance policy network, and institutions such as Cedefop, have an important role to play in encouraging such work at national level, and evaluating and disseminating it in the broader European context.

1. Introduction

1.1. The study

This Cedefop report is based on a study that comprised two principal components: a review of current training and qualification routes for career guidance practitioners, including an analysis of trends and changes; and development of a competence framework for career guidance professionals.

The study has as its context several earlier studies and policy initiatives relating to career guidance, carried out by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2004), the World Bank (Watts and Fretwell, 2004), the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop, Sultana, 2004) and the European Training Foundation (ETF) (Sultana and Watts, 2007; Sweet, 2007). Its distinctive contribution to evolving work in this field is its detailed focus on staff competence, and how training can best contribute both to practitioner competence and to the overall quality of career guidance services. These subjects received attention in the preceding reports, but as one among a wide range of policy issues. Here they are positioned centre-stage.

The remainder of this introductory section aims to provide a context for the study. It draws, where appropriate, on the data collected from participating countries (see Annex 1), particularly relating to trends and changes, as well as on other contextual material.

1.2. Career guidance in the context of EU strategies

The European Union's Lisbon strategy, with its overall intentions to make the European Union (EU) the most competitive economy in the world and achieve full employment by 2010, requires widespread action to optimise the capabilities and potential of all citizens (European Commission, Gelauff and Lejour, 2006). For individuals to secure their employability does not simply mean a constant updating of skills, but acquiring completely new skills to cope with changing occupational profiles and skill requirements resulting from rapid technological and economic developments.

The recent forecast published by Cedefop (2008c) reveals that there will be a relatively high labour market need for people with a solid vocational education in Europe in the future. Almost 55 million of a total of 105 million job openings during 2006-20 (including replacements and new jobs), will require medium level qualifications. By comparison about 41 million jobs will require high qualification levels, whereas for the remaining 10 million jobs low levels of qualifications will suffice.

Labour market policies, reforms and trends influence the development of individual work roles, accompanied for many by the acquisition of higher or more relevant skills. Such changes rely on the myriad individual decisions of citizens, who need the confidence to make personal changes and take on new challenges, plus the support to do so in a well-informed and considered way. For some, this is the way out of unemployment or other forms of marginalisation; for many more, it is moving 'one step up' (to borrow the phrase that

encompasses the Irish government's Enterprise Strategy Group initiative for its country's workforce).

The nature and quality of private individual decisions are now a matter of considerable public importance, as are the extent and quality of the career guidance services available to support them. Such services need to be widely accessible on a lifelong basis, to serve the needs of individuals, the economy and wider society. A training centre in the Netherlands emphasises in its vision statement that career development is not merely a body of activities to develop a career. Instead, the statement continues, it is a particular approach for participation in society which is one of the main issues in Europe. Especially through employment, citizens become engaged and are able to contribute to a social and democratic society. A job is not only for earning money, but also a carrier ('career') for personal development and leverage for community building.

Complex education and training systems, and the opportunities they provide in formal as well as non-formal and informal settings, are not very transparent for most individuals. As a consequence, most citizens require support for their career planning in order to choose between different education and training options as well as to manage transitions from education to labour market successfully. It is against this background that policies and strategies for guidance and career counselling have become a political priority in Europe. The Member States – perhaps more strongly than ever before – acknowledge that adequately trained career guidance practitioners are a prerequisite for making high quality guidance service provision a reality for every European citizen.

1.3. Characteristics of effective career guidance systems

Contributors to this study have been clear that one of the necessary characteristics of a good career guidance system is that it must be 'both widespread and target-group specific; extensive and intensive' (Austrian contributor). Previous reports (OECD, 2004; Sultana, 2003) have shown career guidance provision to be mixed across Europe. In almost every country, there are examples of good practice, alongside significant gaps in provision.

Many European countries are actively addressing a range of gaps in their current provision. Some of these relate to the characteristics of particular potential users of services, including older people, those in rural areas and those in employment; the latter group is the subject of a recent European study (Cedefop, 2008a). In other countries there is more general recognition of the need for 'proactive and preventative guidance for groups with non-traditional career histories'. What is viewed as a 'non-traditional career history' may vary from one circumstance to another: the term encompasses a wide range of issues that are commonly listed when the need for diversity in service delivery is considered.

Other identified gaps relate to the provision of particular aspects of career guidance services. In some countries there are no national systems for collecting and disseminating key elements of the information required for effective career guidance. Greece and Iceland, for example, report a lack of publicly available labour market information, limiting the ability of career guidance practitioners to introduce discussion of trends and skill requirements with their service users.

Even where comprehensive information services have been developed, it is not always easy to make them equally available to all people. The use of ICT has undoubtedly had a large impact on extending access to such services, but access to ICT itself is not universal; this results from lack of hardware and equipment, or because of difficulties (sensory loss, learning difficulties) or the personal preferences of the potential service user.

1.4. Changes and trends

The main focus of this study is the training routes through which current or intending career guidance practitioners can develop the knowledge, skills and wider competences required for their professional work. Training routes frequently reflect national policies and priorities, and adjust to reflect changes in such policies. It is, therefore, an important part of the context for this study to record some of the most significant changes, and cross-country trends in these respects.

Most contributors reported increased policy attention to career guidance and, in many cases, went on to detail legislation or strategic actions following from this attention. This was not universal: a contributor from the Netherlands remarked that: 'everyone agrees on the necessity of good career guidance, but in practice there is not yet much progress'. However, progress is evident in many countries, with actions falling into several domains.

1.4.1. Stronger legal foundations for careers work

Career guidance is the subject of legislative change in several countries, sometimes focused on the schools setting.

In the Czech Republic, a decree issued in 2005 contains specifications for guidance services in schools, outlining the services to be provided, the guidance activities required (including for students with mental or physical disabilities), the anticipated outcomes, the materials available and the charges allowable. The new school departments established under this decree have specified types of staff, including educational guidance and career guidance counsellors.

New legislation in Iceland in 2008 stipulates that educational and vocational counselling should be accessible to all school students in lower and upper secondary education, and that it must be provided by qualified specialists.

In other cases, legislation links school-based services to other career support. The National Board of Education in Finland has defined new national curricula for comprehensive and secondary-level schools, with new emphasis on the responsibility of the school to provide guidance. This legislation requires cross-sectoral service delivery, jointly with the Public Employment Service and with health and social services, thus impacting on the competences needed: practitioners must be involved in designing service delivery and in operating in networks to deliver the services.

The Guidance and Counselling System Cooperation Council was established in Latvia in 2006. Subsequently the services of the Public Employment Service and the Professional Career Counselling Centre were merged in 2007, while the Ministry of Education took the lead role in an ESF project (2005-08) to develop career education and counselling. Among the project's activities are the development of a career education model syllabus, delivery of

a short training course (72 hours) to nearly 5 400 teachers, and the development of a new two-year master's study programme entitled career counsellor (see case study on Latvia in Section 4.5.).

Other legislation embraces a wider range of services. In Lithuania, a 2003 career guidance strategy sought to establish a coherent career guidance system starting in schools, continuing through transitional periods and accessible throughout adult working life. Since that date, seven hundred career information points have been established by the Ministry of Education and Science in general education and vocational education schools, educational centres, libraries, labour exchange offices, and other institutions. Guidance counsellors at seven territorial labour market training and counselling services (TLMTCS) provide career counselling services to unemployed people, job seekers and disadvantaged groups of clients. TLMTCS is part of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour which also works with students of general education schools and out-of-school young people

In Poland, a series of ordinances relating to work within the remit of the Ministries of Labour and of Education have established standards for career counselling and career information in schools and elsewhere. Specialised training has developed within both first- and second-cycle higher education. As the numbers of qualified staff increase, such qualifications are becoming the requirement for progression within the career guidance profession (see case study on Poland in Section 4.6.).

In April 2007, the Slovak government approved a policy on lifelong learning and lifelong guidance, prepared by the Ministry of Education. Despite considerable earlier changes in the Public Employment Service (merging labour offices with the district offices of the Ministry for Social Affairs and the Family and extending their services, particularly for those facing disadvantage in the labour market), cooperation between the two key ministries remains a challenge in implementing the new policy.

1.4.2. Merger of service delivery points

Several countries have developed merged services to provide more straightforward access for the public.

In Denmark, guidance services for schools, along with outreach youth guidance services, have been merged into 46 cross-municipal guidance units, known as *Ungdommens Uddannelsesvejledning*; HE-related guidance units have similarly been merged into seven regional guidance units, known as *Studievalg*. The former Public Employment Service, including its career guidance services, is now part of approximately 100 municipal jobcentres. All these units work under public-authority guidelines, with targets that support broad policy goals, such as increasing participation in youth education (to 95 %) and higher education (to 50 %) (see case study on Denmark in Section 4.3.).

In Norway, delivery of public employment services has been merged with social security systems since 2006. New regional partnerships are encouraging closer liaison between PES, the education sector and employers. One result is growing emphasis on the professionalisation of career guidance counsellors; increasingly PES staff are joining their education-based colleagues on the university-based training courses for career guidance counsellors.

The Ministries of Education and of Labour and Social Affairs in Spain launched integrated centres for vocational training in 2005. These centres, incorporating information and career guidance services, aim to assist people in taking appropriate career decisions throughout life. They have responsibilities for evaluation of in-service and non-formal training in relation to Spain's national system of qualifications and vocational training. A later decree added further responsibility for providing guidance for self-employment and the development of entrepreneurial skills.

In Romania, following a regulation in 2005, the Ministry of Education established 42 centres for resources and educational assistance (CIRAE). Operating at county level, these institutions manage, coordinate and evaluate the activities both of the guidance and counselling centres and of the associated centres for inclusive education and for speech therapy services.

These are positive moves in making services visible and understandable to the public.

1.4.3. Managing diffusion

Some countries have moved in other directions, and are now reevaluating the impact of their current methods of delivering services. Removal of the State monopoly on career guidance services in Germany has resulted in a mix of different services, but there now appears to be a widely held view that getting in touch with public vocational guidance services has become more complicated and less transparent for users. A government-sponsored review from 2005 to 2007 (Niedlich et al., 2007) has suggested that those most in need of additional support (for example, those with disabilities) might be most at risk of not accessing suitable services. A key outcome has been recognition of the need for policies which increase quality, transparency and professionalisation in a heterogeneous field, and which provide proactive services for those with non-traditional career histories.

The OECD review of career guidance and public policy (OECD, 2004, p. 148) challenged policy-makers 'to consider how a comprehensive approach can be achieved through a combination of some or all of the existing models'. One response to this challenge has been a growth in networking and regional cooperation.

In Austria, network projects have been established to put in place the actions on lifelong guidance which were identified within a national lifelong learning strategy. The networks are led by one core partner in each province.

A similar pattern of development is seen in Germany's *Länder* in a programme 'Learning regions: providing support for networks', established in 2001. The intention is to bring together important players from different educational sectors, not just for networking of existing services but to develop new offers within an overall regional strategy.

Several countries have established national or regional lifelong guidance forums to encourage closer collaboration between different forms of service provision (Cedefop, 2008b).

1.4.4. Catalysts for change in training

A particular concern noted by McCarthy (2004) was the lack of connection between training institutions and policy-makers. There is little evidence of change in this respect: it remains an area with scope for development. But the situation varies considerably between countries and positive moves can be seen.

In Ireland, the National Guidance Forum, which operated between 2004 and 2006, brought together policy-makers, trainers, delivery organisations and professional associations to develop frameworks that would underpin future developments. Key outputs included:

(a) a framework for the personal outcomes needed by individual citizens to manage their career and learning effectively;
(b) a competence framework for career guidance practitioners, detailing the competences which they need to support such development in both school pupils and older citizens;
(c) a report *Quality in guidance* which is a quality framework for guidance (see case study on Ireland in Section 4.4.).

A recent policy framework for career guidance in Malta acknowledges the need for different levels of career guidance training, given the different responsibilities and roles that are required. This will lead to a requirement for professional training at postgraduate level as the policy framework is adopted.

Scotland has developed a new master's programme in 'career guidance and development'. Feasibility work was funded by the Scottish Executive (the devolved government in Scotland) and managed by Careers Scotland (the government-funded delivery organisation). The resulting subject benchmark statement was approved by the Scottish Executive and published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, which will have a continuing role in ensuring the quality of delivery of the resulting training courses (see case study on Scotland in Section 4.7.).

In Spain, the Ministry of Education has led the development of a range of new master's degrees in secondary teacher training. One specialisation is in educational and career guidance, and this will become a legal requirement for working as a career guidance professional in schools.

In other countries, access to European funding, notably through the ESF, has given rise to programmes for the development of both delivery and training. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are examples of such use of ESF funding.

International cooperation with input from outside Europe has also had some effect. Both Bulgaria and Romania have used the USA-based global career development facilitator (GCDF) accreditation. The case study on Bulgaria in this report demonstrates how such collaboration can have far-reaching effects nationally, including the development of a master's degree which incorporates a European credit transfer and accumulation system (ECTS) rating for the GCDF module that is integrated in the course.

A further development, noted particularly in the Nordic countries, is the increase in networking and cooperation between specialist staff in universities offering career guidance courses. This is the subject of comment from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. The creation of new training courses in Latvia and the UK (Scotland) involved partnership

between universities, as well as with other bodies. Other countries lament the lack of such coordination. In Poland it is estimated that some 30 postgraduate courses may exist, but there is no central information source and only limited networking between universities, many of which are private institutions.

1.5. The role of career guidance specialists in dispersed delivery networks

In reviewing the wide range of qualifications currently acceptable for entry to career guidance practice across various European countries, the OECD report (2004, p. 97) comments that many are general in nature (psychology or pedagogy) and do not cover the 'specific theories or specific methods of career guidance'. Sultana (2003, p. 30) found that in relation to the (then) acceding and candidate countries for EU membership, 'career guidance … is not yet professionalised – i.e. it is not often offered by staff who have specialised and regulated career guidance qualifications, with clear entry and qualification routes into clearly defined occupational roles …'.

These views are endorsed and developed by national contributors to this study. There is comment on the need for improved training and 'professionalisation', with one contributor (Latvia) declaring that 'the quality of career counselling services is mainly determined by the counsellor's competences, which should be varied'. This leads to an assertion that career counselling of good quality can only be provided by appropriately educated specialists. This theme is developed by another contributor (Luxembourg) who maintains that such training 'should in my opinion consist of a specialised MA programme in career counselling based on a bachelor diploma obtained in several subjects'.

These views lead to one of the important considerations to arise from this study: the idea that it may be helpful for all countries to share views on a basic level of 'sufficiency' for professional training of career guidance practitioners. This question takes us in two directions: first, which roles would such a definition of 'sufficiency' apply to (discussed here); and second, how might 'sufficiency' be defined (discussed in more detail in Section 3.1.).

In most countries, specialist career guidance roles are recognised in one or more of three arenas: within the education sector; within the public employment service; and in distinct and specialised organisations, frequently in the public sector, but sometimes also in private-sector bodies operating either under public-authority contracts or independently. Training provision in each of these arenas varies widely between and within countries, and is explored in more detail in Section 2.

There is general recognition, however, that career guidance specialist practitioners are not the only people who are able to play a significant role in helping individuals with their career plans and choices (Nykänen et al., 2007). Other professionals have a role to play because of their detailed knowledge of the individual and/or immediate opportunity structures (for example, teachers and educational counsellors), or because of their particular skills in engaging 'hard to reach' people (for example, social workers and youth workers, especially those experienced in outreach activities). People without a professional 'helping' role also have a part to play: parents; mentors, including peer mentors; employers, employer

associations and trade unions; and other volunteers, including those associated with special-need groups. It can be argued (McCarthy, 2004; Cedefop, 2008b) that the need is for cooperation between a range of agencies and individuals, but also that one of the distinctive roles of career guidance specialists is to support and develop such agencies and individuals and to coordinate networks through which they are able to cooperate. The concept of multiprofessionalism is explored by Nykänen et al. (2007), who argue that competence 'is not merely dependent on individuals; it is created through participation in joint activities' (p. 11). Such thinking is further developed by Roelefs and Sanders (2007) who propose that competence may be present at a system or team level, as well in individuals. Regional network projects, such as those noted in Austria and Germany (Section 1.4.), offer the opportunity to examine the extent to which such concepts are being brought into action.

This role of coordinating provision may, however, place specific requirements on the competence of career guidance practitioners, and this is reflected in the competence framework within this report, where one of the 'supporting competences' is 'design strategies for career development'. This competence requires career guidance practitioner to have an overview of the potential target population for services and to play a role in establishing aims, objectives and delivery methods for career development activities for these target groups. Further tasks include agreeing who will do what (including both the specialist's own role, and the roles of other people), and providing training and development opportunities and support materials for those involved in delivery. This key function includes making 'the specific theories and specific methods of career guidance' accessible to others, at an appropriate level of detail and complexity, and also aligning them with the existing professional competence frameworks of other professional groups, or with the perspectives and interests of other groups such as employers, parents and volunteers. Depending on circumstances, career guidance specialists may be allocated a part in delivery, or may act only in supplying and resourcing others who directly deliver services. They may also have a role to play as the instigator of review and evaluation activities, in the context of a quality-assurance strategy for any devolved and dispersed delivery system.

Career guidance provision is disjointed in many countries, as is the training provision related to it. At worst, the range and variety of training routes can lead to professional rivalries and act as an obstacle to the development of coordinated services (a comment from France). The challenge for career guidance practitioners is to turn the 'wide differences in the types of services that different agencies offer to the public' (as reported from France) from a divisive negative into a positive enrichment of the overall offer of career guidance services, through networks founded on democratic dialogue and respecting place, information, knowledge and competence (Nykänen et al., 2007). This will contribute to the 'widespread and target-group specific, extensive and intensive' service, the need for which was outlined in Section 1.3. above.

1.6. Competence, training, and accreditation of prior experience and learning

Such delivery networks, with career guidance specialist staff in central roles, can facilitate training for first-in-line staff, as in the models of non-formal guidance reviewed by Watts and McCarthy (1996; 1998). Among the issues arising from networked delivery models are the need to identify the minimum specific competences needed for each type of client interaction, and mechanisms to identify effectively the extent to which these competences already exist (for example, through other professional training) or the training needed to develop them. Wherever training is offered, whether accredited or not, it should recognise prior learning and experience as the baseline for further development.

Devolved and dispersed delivery systems also raise the question of how to enable professional progression for those whose non-formal delivery experiences lead to an interest in progressing to a more formal professional role in career guidance. Their prior experience and learning should be recognised in their route to further qualification. This requirement is integral to the Bologna and Copenhagen processes ([2]), which establish frameworks for credit rating for all vocational and higher education and training. Accreditation of prior experience and learning (APEL) can be facilitated by competence frameworks, such as that developed by this project, which identify the key tasks and competences for career guidance practitioners.

The concept of 'competence', which underpins these considerations, is discussed in detail in Section 5.1.

([2]) Bologna process: see Qualifications framework in the EHEA (http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/qf/qf.asp and Overarching framework of qualifications of the EHEA (http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/qf/overarching.asp) [both cited 28.11.2008].

Copenhagen declaration: see http://ec.europa.eu/education/pdf/doc125_en.pdf [cited 28.11.2008].

2. Training for career guidance: the current situation

2.1. Career guidance roles

Career guidance exists in some countries as a specialist occupation requiring extensive and specific training. This is as yet not very common in Europe where, in many countries, career guidance activities are a subspecialism within another role, or are carried out by those who have obtained career guidance posts on the basis of general qualifications or of extensive life experience that is seen as relevant to career guidance.

Where career guidance is a subspecialism, those delivering career guidance services may more commonly define themselves according to their primary role and training. Three such categories were identified by Watts et al. (1994) and remain much in evidence, either alongside or as alternatives to the specialised career guidance role:

(a) psychologists, whose training relevant to career guidance is either assumed to have been incorporated into their broad psychological training, or who may have received limited supplementary training;

(b) teachers, who may perform their career guidance responsibilities alongside their teaching duties with limited supplementary training, or who may have received more extensive training, though often as an educational counsellor rather than for a careers-specific role;

(c) labour-market administrators, whose in-service training is likely to include an emphasis on public administration, including unemployment insurance, and services to job-seekers and employers (e.g. placement into work).

Where career guidance activity is combined with other roles, it frequently leads to the career tasks receiving lower priority among other work pressures and being more difficult for potential users to identify and access. In such cases, separate specialised training is less likely to be provided, and policy-makers may find it harder to control the delivery of career guidance services and to develop them to meet their strategic aims (OECD, 2004). It is also often the case in such circumstances that relevant training is available only on an in-service basis, so that it becomes accessible only to those who have been selected for the relevant job.

2.2. Training traditions and patterns

The diversity of situations within which career guidance practitioners work is accompanied by equal diversity in form and manner of training provided in preparation for, and delivery, of their working role. Sultana (1995) identifies four traditions in the initial education of teachers. These are applicable across a range of professional areas, including career guidance. While these are presented here sequentially, it is important to note that they are rarely distinct ‘types’ but are commonly blended in the design of professional training. Also, this listing does not necessarily relate to historical progression.

The first is an ‘academic’ tradition, which aligns with seeking status for the profession by association with a university academic discipline. Whereas in teaching this was associated with the elevation of the subject specialisation as the basis for assertion of status, for career guidance it may be more associated with the attempt to demarcate a distinctive range which constitutes the ‘specific theories and specific methods of career guidance’. In both cases, status is potentially claimed through academic mastery of the field of knowledge.

The second is a ‘social efficiency’ tradition, which is associated with technocratic rationality, identifying the specific duties and tasks of career guidance and building training programmes to ensure their performance at an acceptable level. This tradition values competence statements, and may include delivery of training through practice of skills and procedures. Because it aims to move new recruits rapidly to competent performance, it may be particularly applicable to induction training programmes, although this is not its only potential application.

The third is a ‘developmentalist’ tradition, which gives priority to the broad development of the career guidance practitioner. Professional training attends to methods for developing relationships with clients rather than mechanically applying skills. Practice is based on using the practitioner-client relationship as a medium for mutual growth.

Finally, a ‘social reconstructionist’ tradition attends to the transformation of social situations rather than their reproduction. It is most likely to apply in situations where the career guidance practitioner is concerned to address disadvantage and discrimination, and both to challenge ‘the system’ and to strengthen the individual service user in addressing the issues they encounter. Many EU-funded projects are targeted at disadvantaged groups, either through providing training opportunities to which career guidance is an adjunct service, or directly addressing the career development needs of groups such as refugees or older workers. Where specialised training has been developed by these projects, it may well be of a social reconstructionist nature.

Training for career guidance practitioners occurs at various stages of their personal career journey, notably pre-service, at induction, or on a continuing in-service basis. These distinctions are not clear-cut. Many learning opportunities can be accessed on both a full-time (typically pre-service) or part-time (typically in-service) basis. The following paragraphs indicate some of the situations more commonly found during this study.

2.2.1. Pre-service training

In a number of countries, pre-service training is not available, although across Europe the trend is clearly towards its expansion. Some training falls at a borderline between pre-service and induction, in that it follows recruitment but precedes direct work with clients.

The increasing amount of available pre-service training is mainly delivered through academic courses in universities and other higher-education institutions, at first- or second-cycle level. It is likely to align most strongly with the academic and developmentalist traditions outlined above. It is unlikely to be exclusively used by potential entrants to career guidance practice. Many courses are offered through part-time as well as full-time modes and those in post may choose to access such training, particularly where it is newly

available, both to develop their knowledge and skill levels and to improve their status in relation to career promotion opportunities.

2.2.2. Induction training

Induction training is common within public employment services where employees follow structured programmes; these programmes come after recruitment on the basis of general educational qualifications or qualifications regarded as a proxy for specialised career guidance training. Frequently their induction covers a range of administrative and procedural aspects of their work as well as client-interaction skills. In the past, PES training may have followed a social efficiency tradition, but there are changes in the training offered to PES staff in many countries and any of the other traditions above may become more prominent, depending on the policy initiatives which now direct services.

Induction training produces a more varied picture in other career guidance settings. Notably within education settings, the combination of previous professional training in a related field such as pedagogy or youth work, with experience of work with the client group (school, college or university students), can lead to a situation where induction training is not prioritised. Across the whole range of educational institutions and networks, those moving laterally into career guidance from other professional roles may bring diverse experiences, values and motivations. This will be influenced by their earlier professional training (which itself will have had characteristics of any of the four traditions in the typology outlined above) and by the values and social purposes of earlier and current work settings.

2.2.3. Continuing in-service training

Continuing training is necessary in a context where change is rapid both in the information context for much career guidance work, notably labour market information (LMI) and training structures, and in the operational structures within which delivery teams are based. The pace of change raises superficial dilemmas, such as information updating, which – when unravelled – expose profound questions that can only be fully addressed by consideration of typologies such as the four traditions outlined above. As one example, a country contributor suggested that labour-market knowledge should be a topic positioned largely within continuing in-service training because of its rapid change; another commented on the need for the inclusion of labour market study in initial training to develop sound theoretical understanding of the complexities related to labour markets, as an essential context for interpreting ongoing change.

2.2.4. Historical perspective

Training responds to broader social conditions. It is possible to trace the ascendancy of apprenticeship-style training, academically-situated training (particularly following the expansion of university-based provision during the last half-century), competence-based approaches and a reflective practitioner route (Schön, 1987). More recently, much training is based on a mix of developments from earlier models: for example, aspects of apprenticeship are evident in the attention now paid to ‘communities of practice’ and situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Countries in Europe are adapting their training systems to national

priorities and circumstances within the context of European Union strategies. The following sections offer a picture of how training for career guidance practitioners has developed recently within the context of broader changes.

2.3. Specialised training

A key finding of the current study is that a number of countries are making significant moves towards more specialised training. Table 1 gives an extensive (but not comprehensive) list of examples of such training that is accredited within higher education. The table shows considerable diversity in the level and length of training courses, and of their credit rating, where this is known.

This diversity arises in part because developments of new specialised training courses are the results of various initiatives: in some cases driven at government level by policy and legislative changes; in others instigated by individual training institutions, notably within the higher education sector; and in yet others initiated to meet the needs of specific projects, including (but not limited to) those in receipt of EU funds.

In a number of cases, a single route to specialised training addresses the requirements of different employment settings. In Malta, the part-time postgraduate diploma course, offered to those already practising or wishing to enter career guidance work, is designed to meet the needs of both the labour market and the education sectors. Within this 90 ECTS course, there are core components for all participants, plus optional units according to the sector and specialisation that participants are interested in.

Long-established first-cycle degree courses in the Netherlands combine study of human resource management, job placement and career guidance in their first two years. The third year – on practical placement – and the fourth year of study allow specialisation in career guidance. A new master's course in career development will shortly become available at one university for those who wish to continue their career guidance training.

In Finland the evolution of counsellor training was integrated with the development of guidance services in educational settings. Guidance was included in the curricula of comprehensive education from 1970, in comprehensive secondary level from 1980, and in secondary level vocational education in 1982. Counsellor training remained separate until 1998. Reform of national core curricula in 1994 had required cooperation between educational institutes at secondary level. The implementation of that reform was supported with a national in-service training project for counsellors, which also provided information for qualitative evaluation of guidance provision nationally. One of the findings of the evaluation study was that the separate training of practitioners was one of the reasons for separate guidance services. Thus, the new legislation on guidance counsellor qualifications in 1998 required common core training (60 ECTS) for all practitioners working in educational settings in Finland.

Poland developed its first specialised university curriculum in career guidance in 1997, as part of a World Bank-funded programme. The ensuing decade has seen widespread adoption of this course, and development of master's programmes. These widely available courses are accessed by people from, or intending to enter, a range of professional settings for career guidance delivery.

Postgraduate training in Iceland, soon to be extended to a full master's qualification, has trained people for careers work in all sectors: schools, public employment service, higher education and the workplace. A newly increased emphasis on guidance in the workplace has been strengthened by outreach delivery through nine lifelong learning centres, established as part of a Leonardo da Vinci programme.

Elsewhere, as described later, specialised training is more specific to particular sectors.

Shared initial training, with appropriate specialisation, can be anticipated to make a strong contribution to the development of a distinctive identity for career guidance practitioners, which is separate from other professional identities. The benefits of a more coherent identity for the career guidance profession include greater public awareness of the availability of career services and of their potential usefulness to individual citizens. A counter-argument is that services targeted to particular populations can more directly address specific needs related to the age, stage and other conditions of the service user. But it is difficult to see anything but advantage in moving towards common-core elements of basic training (as, for example, in the new postgraduate qualification in Malta). This will enhance networking between sectors, increase the possibility of job mobility between sectors for individual staff, and contribute to building a profession and academic research community capable of working across sectors. Where the available training is provided on an in-service basis, such common-core training is less feasible. However, there is currently a distinct shift towards raising levels of qualification, through training delivered within the higher education sector, and this permits consideration of a concerted move towards common-core elements of training.

In a few instances, however, there has been regression in the provision or coordination of training. No specialised courses in career guidance exist in universities in either Flemish- or French-speaking Belgium, and the limited number of academic posts with a career guidance specialism has recently been reduced. The nascent interest in specialised training in French-speaking Belgium will need to address this issue.

The UK has, for many years, had two paths to professional qualification: one largely based on postgraduate academic study, the other through competence-based workplace accreditation. Recent legislative changes in England to the delivery of young people's services have moved responsibility for accreditation of workplace training for career advisers to a separate body, potentially placing in jeopardy the ability of staff to move between adult and young people delivery sectors with the ease that was previously possible. By contrast, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland offer all-age guidance services.

A few small countries do not, or have not until now, provided specialist training of their own, but instead have accessed such provision in other countries. Thus career guidance practitioners in Liechtenstein have traditionally accessed specialised training at master's level in Switzerland; those in Luxembourg have followed psychology degrees in other countries, though with no requirement that these should include a specific career guidance element. Postgraduate training in career guidance is also not available in Cyprus: staff there undertake such study elsewhere, most frequently in the UK, but sometimes in the USA or France. For those completing the postgraduate qualification in career guidance in the UK,

arrangements exist for the initial year of practice to be supervised by the Counselling and Career Education Service in Cyprus, so that participants achieve the full award.

Training is also accessed in other countries in some further circumstances. Where master's degrees are not available, as in Malta, these have sometimes been pursued by distance study, in Malta's case commonly through UK universities. One further cross-country instance is the specialist training (postgraduate and master's level) for university-based career counsellors at the University of Reading, which is designed to cover relevant staff not only in the UK but also in Ireland.

2.4. School-based roles

In the majority of countries, careers work in schools is delivered by those whose initial training has been in teaching or in psychology, the latter usually with some specialised training in educational and developmental psychology.

Specialised post-qualification courses have a long history in some countries for those teachers who undertake educational, personal and career counselling as an adjunct to their teaching role, or as a distinct career route.

Guidance counsellors in both Finland's and Ireland's schools have long been required to undertake postgraduate training, which is provided in several universities. In recent years the training has been diversified, to include part-time training routes, and has been extended to allow progress to master's level (see case study on Ireland in Section 4.4.).

- In Austria, in-service training of school counsellors is regulated by ordinance; initial training has, in recent years, been extended in length. However, the minimum continued training is set at the low level of two specialist seminars within five years, and a further two seminars within 15 years, with only two of the 14 specialist seminar subjects appearing to relate directly to careers work.

The Netherlands has four training centres which provide two-year part-time training for teachers, and for small numbers of other staff in related work with young people. Unlike the preceding two instances, the Netherlands has no statutory requirement regarding staff qualifications for careers work in schools; many undertaking such work have received very brief specialised training, or none at all.

A similar situation exists in Hungary. Several universities offer a two-year part-time in-service course in school counselling for qualified teachers, but this is not a requirement for those undertaking the role of school counsellor'

The Czech Republic has separate training arrangements for teachers who have qualified recently and for those whose qualifications are more dated. It is now a normal requirement for educational guidance counsellors to have a teaching qualification, plus a master's degree (with no subject specified), and then to pass a special course in educational counselling provided at some higher education institutions. Career topics constitute only a small part of this training.

In Greece, in-service training for teachers is university-based, but does not form part of an accredited programme. Training is heavily focused on counselling skills, with very limited coverage of career development or labour market topics. The absence of a system of labour market information in Greece, combined with the lack of any first-hand experience of

non-school workplaces, tends to leave school counsellors ill-equipped to address career issues.

In recent years, and notably responding to the public-policy attention paid to career guidance within the European Union, short-term in-service training in guidance has undergone considerable growth. In Bulgaria, about a thousand people have been trained through a 120-hour programme leading to the global career development facilitator (GCDF) accreditation. About 80 % of these are school-based staff (see case study on Bulgaria in Section 4.2.).

Some teachers in Romania have been able to access a GCDF accreditation programme in their country, also based on a 120-hour course. The minimum entry requirement is completion of first-cycle higher education; emphasis is also placed on supervised experience, which is attested by a work supervisor to form part of the portfolio for GCDF accreditation. In addition, a lower level of input has been applied more widely across Romania. A new guidance and counselling hour has replaced the previous tutorial hour in all secondary-level schools. To implement this compulsory change, with complex new material to be covered, tutors and counsellors were required to attend a three-day training event.

- Three sets of professional standards have been developed in Estonia. During 2005-08 three Estonian public universities were piloting the first joint training programme (12 ECTS) for career counsellors, career information specialists and career coordinators at schools within the framework of the career services project funded through ESF. Altogether 55 career specialists were trained.

In Latvia, the development of training for careers teachers (a 72-hour course) was coordinated with the development of a model syllabus for secondary-school students, encompassing self-exploration, career exploration and the development of career management skills. Training will have reached nearly 5 400 teachers by 2008, and increasingly offers teachers access to Internet-based tools and to further professional development, including progression to master's level (see case study on Latvia in Section 4.5.).

The OECD review (2004) raised concerns that combining responsibility for career guidance with other occupational roles within schools leads to careers work being accorded low priority, and to difficulty for people in identifying what career guidance service they could access. Such concerns have stimulated debate in a number of countries. Significant change has occurred mainly in those countries which have moved the main responsibility for career guidance to separate units, as in Denmark, or have separated school-based specialisations so that career counselling is a separate strand from personal and social counselling, as in Norway. There has also been some sharpening of focus and improvement in the quality of service in those countries which have considerably raised the qualification level for school-based staff, such as Finland. Where training courses include career practitioners from both school and non-school settings, as in Malta (see Section 2.3. above) and also in Iceland, a wider perspective on the role of career guidance may develop.

In other cases, shorter but focused training, as provided by the GCDF-accredited course, may offer considerably greater coverage of career issues than longer but less specialised courses. This focused training varies, exceeding 120 hours in the GCDF programme in

Bulgaria and Romania, lasting 72 hours in Latvia, and occupying just three days (about 20 hours) for tutors in Romania not accessing GCDF training. The parallel initiatives in Romania (see above) offer an interesting possibility for a comparative evaluation study.

2.5. Public employment service roles

There are a number of instances of the support offered by public employment services being extended both to include more attention to career planning, and to permit access to service beyond the traditional target group of unemployed workers (see also Sultana and Watts, 2006). One such example is Cyprus, where the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance has moved on from an emphasis solely on unemployed people, and delivering services through staff without specialist career guidance knowledge. The ministry has now appointed 16 graduate-level counsellors who are receiving specialised in-service training and offering guidance to the whole population, but with a particular focus on certain groups such as the long-term unemployed, women not active in the labour market, and older workers.

2.5.1. Specialised academic training for PES staff

In public employment services, most staff are recruited on the basis of general educational qualifications or academic qualifications which are deemed to be relevant, most often in psychology or social sciences. There are, however, a number of instances of more specialised academic training.

Germany has long offered degree-level training. For many years this was through an association between the *Bundesagentur für Arbeit* (BA) and the University of Mannheim. Recent years have seen the establishment of a specific, private University of BA in Mannheim, training approximately 300 students per year at two locations. One specialised degree covers career guidance and case management, while the other focuses more on public administration issues in employment market management. Specialised training is not, however, mandatory for employment as a career guidance counsellor in the BA.

Finland's public employment service works through two arms: one is focused on job-seekers and employment services, the other on vocational development. Vocational guidance psychologists in the latter section are recruited with a master's degree in psychology and a licence to practise (both being legal requirements). Planned in-service training addresses both the specific needs of each individual and the changing needs of the service in the national social and economic setting. Staff working with job-seekers in the employment arm of the PES are increasingly involved with guidance activities, and a basic training programme now develops their client-interaction skills, as well as the skills needed for providing services to employers.

In Ireland, the National University of Ireland at Maynooth has a long tradition of providing training in adult guidance and counselling. Staff from the public employment service (FÁS) are increasingly joined by staff from adult education and community settings. The course has changed over recent years, in response to the buoyant labour market situation and high levels of employment; those who have remained unemployed frequently have significant difficulties and disadvantages, including mental health problems, disabilities and intercultural issues. The diploma-level courses at Maynooth are distinctive in accepting both graduate

and non-graduate entrants, who undertake a common teaching programme, but are expected to meet different assessment criteria, suggesting the recognition here, as elsewhere, of different levels of competence (Roefels and Sanders, 2007). Progression is possible from the part-time certificate (a post-entry requirement for all FÁS staff) through diploma and higher diploma levels and on to master's-level courses.

In Hungary, the public employment service recruits a small percentage of its staff from the first-cycle higher education degree course at Szent Istvan University, Gödöllő, where they have trained alongside a greater proportion of students aiming to work in the country's pedagogical institutes. Currently some 170 staff hold this qualification, and a further small number (between 10 and 15 in total) have completed a part-time postgraduate course in employment and career counselling at Eotvas University, Budapest, where about half of their fellow students will have come from the private sector, usually the HR function in large private-sector firms.

There is also a trend in several countries towards more compulsory training in career guidance for some staff in public employment services. In Poland, initial employment as a vocational counsellor in the public employment service's labour offices requires graduate-level qualifications. However, a new licensing system introduced in 2004 comprises three levels, with promotion to the second level requiring completion of post-diploma studies in vocational counselling. Recent changes in both Iceland and Malta, extending the availability of specialised postgraduate training (see Section 2.2. above), are a step towards making such qualification compulsory.

This does not appear to be the norm. In many countries, the study has revealed a picture of training being offered on a more ad hoc basis. This raises questions about whether training is equally accessed by all relevant staff, or only by those with higher levels of commitment or ambition; which, in turn, leads to concerns about the overall quality of delivery of services. McCarthy (2004, p. 160) notes that 'training may be regarded for most countries as the only quality assurance mechanism that exists for guidance'.

There is little evidence that even this limited attention to quality is sufficiently applied in all countries. In Norway, PES staff can access the Career guidance counsellor training (30 ECTS) offered by several regional higher education colleges, but we have no data on how many do so.

In Belgium, most counsellors are graduates in psychology or social work, both in VDAB (Flanders) and in FOREM (French community). In both settings, the roles of career counselling and job placement are clearly demarcated, but training is limited and not systematic; it is only compulsory for those who do not have a tenured position.

The Czech Republic's public employment service recruits career guidance counsellors at first- or second-cycle higher education level, but without specific requirements about the subject of study. A new employment law in 2004 set up a series of 'active employment policy' measures, but no specific action has been taken to address the training needs of those delivering these measures.

The public employment services in both Estonia and Slovenia recruit graduates with a degree in psychology and offer in-service training. Estonia has a continuing programme of in-service training for such staff, but with a small time commitment; in Slovenia, previously

good provision of a range of training modules (unaccredited) has been reduced in recent years.

Recruitment of PES staff in Greece, Spain and Romania is from a wider range of academic disciplines including social science, economics and law as well as psychology. In Romania, any discipline can be considered. While in-service training is offered in these countries, there is less evidence of structured induction training at the point of entry.

Slovakia lacks any formal training in career guidance. The staff in its public employment service hold remarkably diverse qualifications: a survey in late 2007 found that its 269 counsellors (spread across 46 labour offices) held 95 different qualifications, none of them in career guidance and counselling. Those working as career counsellors are indirectly required to hold a master's qualification, in that certain activities with longer-term unemployed people can only be undertaken by those with this level of qualification. However, the academic discipline is not specified.

2.5.2. Generic training

Many countries require graduate-level entry for professional-level roles within their public employment service. Acceptable qualifications and subsequent in-service training vary considerably. In-service training may, in some instances, be well-structured, systematic and addressed to induction needs. In Portugal, for example, the public employment service recruits people with a psychology or sociology degree, and provides a six-month induction training programme designed to develop the necessary competences for work in this sector.

In Austria, the public employment service (AMS) provides basic training at induction to fulfil three purposes: to develop basic specialist expertise for work tasks; to provide coverage of essential guidelines, principles and objectives of the organisation; and to verify the future staff member's suitability for their work function (effectively an extension of the selection process). Training is tailored to the individual's work role. It includes basic training over 15.5 days, and an extended period of further development over 40 weeks (or 52 weeks if teletraining delivery mode is used: see Section 3.2.). The basic training is assessed through a final examination.

Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Sweden are examples of countries which recruit at school-leaver and vocational training levels as well as from universities. Selection in Luxembourg is based on a civil service written test and interview; while occasional in-service training is offered, further training is, to a considerable extent, left to the initiative of the individual member of staff.

2.6. Higher education roles

The OECD review (2004) commented that requirements for qualification are, paradoxically, rare in higher education, despite this being the setting where much of the training for the field is designed and delivered. The present study has identified a number of references to new requirements for higher education institutions to deliver career guidance services, either for their own students or for potential entrants. There are, however, no references to requirements for specific qualifications for people entering newly created posts in this sector.

Denmark is the only country to have a clearly stated requirement for tertiary-level specialised training in the broad higher education sector, for appointment to posts in the *Studievalg* (higher education guidance centres). The provision of progressive levels of specialised training (University of Reading) for higher education careers advisers in the UK and Ireland has made such qualification the norm, though it is not mandatory in either country. In Bulgaria, about one hundred university career counsellors have received accreditation following the global career development facilitator (GCDF) training.

2.7. Roles in other settings

Other settings for career guidance delivery are extensive and vary considerably from one country to another: it is beyond the scope of this limited study to undertake a thorough review of them all. In Section 1.5. we consider the delivery of career guidance through dispersed networks. Such networks commonly exist in adult education settings, and are the subject of deliberate strategies in some countries, such as the 'learning regions' programme in Germany. Other networks have developed in response to funding opportunities or specifically identified client needs: prime examples are a considerable number of European-Union-funded transnational projects addressing the needs of, for example, refugees and asylum-seekers, or older workers. Training may be developed on an ad hoc basis to meet project needs, or may be accessed from existing providers.

There are specific issues that arise for career guidance in relation to vocational education and training (VET). In some countries, the individual's choice between academic and vocational routes is overlaid by questions of status, or a perceived lack of parity of esteem between academic and vocational routes. Legitimate considerations of esteem need to be carefully balanced with individual inclinations and capacities, both to best support choices for each individual and to serve national economic and skill needs. Similarly, after embarking on a vocational route, trainees should retain access to career guidance services. They are as likely as other learners to want to explore options for progression or changes of direction.

Contributors to the study generally worked in publicly-funded services or in the public education sector. Coverage of the private sector, in terms of private career guidance services and of support to employees, is therefore limited. A recent, detailed study of career development at work (Cedefop, 2008a) contains a few examples of training routes operating in the private sector, but most are either based on short-term project funding, or use aspects of public training provision already covered in this chapter.

2.8. The broader context

This study, which focuses specifically on routes to training, can only report general impressions about changes in career guidance delivery. Among the impressions gained is widespread reporting of an increase in the overall policy interest in career guidance (see Section 1). This is undoubtedly influenced by the development in the last two years of the European lifelong guidance policy network, with its various meetings and work programmes. The data recording system for this study included a section on 'significant changes in career guidance delivery in the last five years'. The purpose of this section was to understand the context for the changes

in training provision that might be related elsewhere in the country's responses. Information collected from national respondents varied considerably in length and in the amount of detail offered – from a few words to several pages. While valuable in providing context for the rest of the data provided, the responses do not themselves constitute a consistent basis from which to explore changes in delivery; nor was this study resourced to do so.

In a minority of cases, response to this question explores national developments which are hindering coherent progress in career guidance. As an example, in Italy a decree on vocational training and career guidance in 2001 was intended to set a series of criteria, including qualifications for career guidance staff. However, at about the same time another government decree greatly increased devolution of powers to the regions and provinces. As a result, it was agreed in 2002 that the regions would lead on defining and assessing the credentials for people working in career guidance. Only a small number of regions have commenced this work, and not in coordination with one another. Thus Italy remains at some distance from an agreed national framework for training and for services to the public.

Those countries that joined the EU in 2004 subsequently gained greater access to EU funds and involvement in transnational projects, a proportion of which have either been directly addressed to career guidance issues, or have paid attention to career guidance as an adjunct to their primary focus on other aspects of employment or learning. Some countries, such as Slovakia, report the impact of these funding sources. Slovakia has been an EU Member State since May 2004. Since its accession, many more opportunities have emerged to develop areas that needed investment, including human resources. Sectoral operational plan human resources (2004-06) allowed finance from the European Social Fund for, among other things, training activities, including opportunities in training for practitioners in career guidance and counselling. During the last two to three years, hundreds of educational advisers from elementary and secondary schools have been trained throughout the country.

There are several references by other recently-joined Member States to the further development of career guidance through future programmes for the use of EU structural funds through to 2013. Significant projects have also been supported by World Bank funding programmes and, on a smaller scale, by United States aid for international development (USAID) programmes. The increased diversity in delivery, particularly through dispersed networks, is mirrored by numerous references by training providers to a greater variety in the employment destination of their course completers, and in the employers served by their in-service training programmes.

The increased levels of activity would benefit from the concurrent development of quality-assurance processes, in which concern for the calibre and competence of staff should be a central strand. Such quality-assurance systems need to consider the overall effectiveness of career guidance services, particularly with regard to client competences (see Section 5.2.), and to begin to produce an evidence base which could provide feedback to inform the further development of training provision for career guidance practitioners.

Table 1. **Examples of training courses in higher education**

	Brief description	ECTS (if known)	Notes on entry requirements
Austria	Diploma Academic career guidance counsellor. Two years part-time, with distance learning; 20 per year, working in different fields.	42	University entry qualifications or completed vocational training plus one year minimum experience, or a 'relevant' ([3]) first degree.
Bulgaria	Master's degree, including GCDF for practical element. Currently one university; increasing to three courses from 2008.	74 (of which seven relate to GCDF)	Any 'relevant' degree.
Denmark	Career guidance counsellor course. Approximately 300 per year at six regional university colleges.	60	Relevant study at first cycle of HE.
Denmark	Candidate degree. 20-30 students per year.	60	Completion of relevant first-cycle degree; work experience.
Denmark	Master's degree. 30-50 students per year on a two- year course.	60	Completion of relevant first-cycle degree; work experience.
Estonia	Pilot training course: ESF-funded in cooperation with three universities. Currently under evaluation.	nine core, three specialist (a specialisation course for each of three groups of practitioners)	Pilot involved currently practising career counsellors, career information specialists and school career coordinators.

([3]) 'Relevant' degrees are stipulated differently in different countries. Frequently (but depending on the focus of the course) they include psychology and pedagogy. Social sciences more broadly are often acceptable, and sometimes the list extends to, for example, economics, law and labour market studies.

	Brief description	ECTS (if known)	Notes on entry requirements
Finland	Master's degree. Different delivery patterns at three universities.	120 (or 300 by progression through first- and second-cycle)	For direct entry to master's course, normally psychology or pedagogy degree.
Finland	Postgraduate diploma.	60	Normally, psychology or pedagogy degree.
France	*Conseiller d'orientation psychologue* (COP). Two-year training.		Psychology degree, plus written and oral tests.
Germany	Bachelor degree, University of the BA, Mannheim. Approximately 300 per year.	180	Employment at BA; academic standard for university entry.
Germany	Master's degree, University of Heidelberg: career counselling and organisational development.	120 (out of which 36 in practice)	First degree in a related field. Minimum one year of practice before as well as practice during the study programme.
Germany	Master's degree, University of Applied Science Nuremberg; counselling.	120	First degree. Two years of practice before.
Hungary	Postgraduate course for school teachers/counsellors; two years, part-time. Delivered by several colleges (*Főiskola*, ISCED 5a level).		First degree, normally pedagogy, bachelor's degree.
Hungary	Bachelor degree, three years. Graduates work in educational fields and PES.		University entry qualifications.
Hungary	Postgraduate course in employment and career counselling, two years part-time. One university: approximately 20 per year, from education, HR, PES.		First degree, usually in psychology, teaching or HR.
Iceland	Postgraduate diploma one-year part-time, with optional progression to master's; majority teachers but also HE, PES and workplace guidance.	60	Any relevant degree.

	Brief description	ECTS (if known)	Notes on entry requirements
Iceland	Postgraduate diploma will be replaced by integrated two-year master's degree from 2010.	120	
Ireland	Postgraduate diploma in guidance and counselling for serving teachers. Two years part-time or one year full-time. Approximately 100 per year at several universities.		Teaching qualification and experience.
Ireland	Higher diploma in adult guidance and counselling. Two years, part-time. 18 per year. Mainly PES staff; some adult education.		Degree, or progression from certificate course.
Ireland	Master's degree in guidance and counselling. Full-time or part-time at two universities.		Usually by progression from postgraduate diploma.
Latvia	Master's degree career counsellor. Two years full-time, or 2.5 years part-time.	120	Relevant first degree, or other degree subjects plus related experience.
Lithuania	Master's degree study programme in career designing (four universities) and career education (one university).	60	Bachelor degree.
Malta	Postgraduate diploma, two years part-time. Addresses both education and PES needs through core components and optional units.	90	Bachelor degree.
Netherlands	Bachelor degree, four years full-time, covering HRD and career counselling (specialised in final two years). Most work in private career agencies or HRD in larger organisations.	240	University entry qualifications.
Netherlands	Master's degree, two years. Started 2008, with approximately 20 students.	90	Bachelor degree.
Norway	Diploma career guidance counsellor. Part-time over several weeks. Mainly teachers, but increasingly others: PES, HE, adult education.	30	Teaching qualification, or general study competences.

	Brief description	ECTS (if known)	Notes on entry requirements
Poland	Postgraduate course in career guidance. Addresses variety of public- and private-sector work roles.		Master's degree in a related subject.
Poland	Bachelor and master's degrees in psychology with options in career guidance widely available (and a move towards more provision of specific career guidance courses).	Varies (all are ECTS rated)	Depends on level of course.
Romania	Guidance and counselling accreditation curriculum national examination: common curriculum and examination available to graduates in related subjects (common examination regardless of degree specialism).		A degree in a related subject; permits qualification as school counsellor.
Romania	Master's degree in guidance and counselling at several universities, and by distance study from one university.		A relevant first degree.
Spain	Master's in secondary school teacher training with specialism in educational and career training. 5-year integrated first- and second-cycle qualification. New from 2008.	60	University entry qualifications.
Sweden	Bachelor of Education in career counselling; three years full-time at three universities. Most graduates work in schools, but a few in PES and other settings.	180	University entry qualifications.
United Kingdom	Postgraduate qualification in career guidance (QCG).		Any degree, with some exceptions for people with relevant experience.
United Kingdom	Master's degree, full-time, part-time and distance learning (several universities).		Relevant first degree; many also have QCG (above).
United Kingdom	(Scotland) Integrated postgraduate diploma and master's degree: qualification in career guidance and development. New from 2007.	90	First degree, or very relevant training and experience.

Source: Data collected by the NICEC research team, January-June 2008.

3. Training: emerging issues

3.1. Sufficiency: level and specialism

Section 1.5. explored the ways in which career guidance specialist practitioners may support delivery of careers work through devolved and dispersed network systems, as well as engaging in their own professional practice with clients. Both aspects of professional work demand considerable capability of the career guidance practitioner, covering a wide range of general personal and intellectual abilities, along with sound knowledge of the theories underpinning career development and career guidance, and skill in working directly with individual clients, groups, and members of collaborative networks.

This raises the question of what level of qualification might generally be regarded as 'sufficient' to fulfil this professional role. At present, it is unlikely that any consensus could be achieved among the Member States on this question. Existing training and qualifications are too diverse: in some countries a master's degree is becoming the norm, while in others there is extremely limited provision of specialised training. Sultana (in Cedefop; Sultana, 2004 and Sultana, forthcoming) reviewed the current state of career guidance as a 'truncated profession' and outlined both the benefits and the potential drawbacks of greater professionalisation. Integral to the development of a distinctive identity for the career guidance profession is the need to pay attention to 'the extent and nature of professional training required prior to entry' (Cedefop, Sultana, 2004, p. 75). It is appropriate to open this debate, even if resolution of the question may be well in the future. We shall, therefore, consider the concept of 'sufficiency' in two respects: level and specialisation.

3.1.1. Level

The capabilities described above will normally be developed through formalised learning. When considered in relation to the European qualifications framework (EQF), the minimum level that encompasses the necessary standard of knowledge, skill and competence is level 6, equivalent to the first cycle of higher education. The descriptors for level 6 comprise:

(a) knowledge: advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles;

(b) skill: advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study;

(c) competence: manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups.

Within the Bologna process, the three-cycle framework for higher education was adopted at the Bergen conference in 2005 ([4]). The description of first-cycle qualifications is worded

([4]) Bologna process: see Qualifications framework in the EHEA (http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/qf/qf.asp) and Overarching framework of qualifications of the EHEA (http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/qf/overarching.asp) [both cited 28.11.2008].

differently from the EQF level 6 descriptors, but the London communiqué (European Ministers for Education, 2007) affirmed that there is no major difference in intent. The Bologna process description of a first-cycle qualification, typically lasting three to four years and including 180-240 ECTS credits, reads as follows:

'Qualifications that signify completion of the first cycle are awarded to students who:

- have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, while supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study;
- can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study;
- have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues;
- can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy.' ([5]).

Policy-makers, specialist trainers and associations of professional staff in each country need to consider whether this level of training is an appropriate goal in their national situation, and what steps are needed to move towards it. In the small minority of countries where a higher level of qualification is becoming the norm, the particular benefits of higher training might be identified and articulated to extend the debate across the Europe-wide guidance community. Brought together, these debates open a route towards seeking evidence of what level of training, and what degree of professional specialisation within such training, are needed to produce client outcomes in line with national and European strategies.

3.1.2. Specialisation

It is widely remarked in earlier studies (OECD, 2004; Cedefop; Sultana, 2004; McCarthy, 2004) that entrants to career guidance roles have frequently trained through related academic fields, such as psychology, education, sociology and social work, or economics, and that these subjects are sometimes regarded as an adequate proxy for specialised career guidance training (see Section 2). While these subjects provide solid foundations on which a deeper understanding of career guidance can be based, we do not support the notion that they obviate the need for such specialised training. Career guidance specialist practitioners need their professional preparation to include coverage of the specific theories and specific methods of career guidance. Such study is central to high quality in the direct delivery of services, and to supporting the unique contribution that the career specialist brings to network delivery. It serves to strengthen professional identity, and is an important

([5]) See: http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/BASIC/050520_Framework_qualifications.pdf [cited 28.11.2008].

building-block in creating an active academic community within each country to engage in national research and development and to interact with the international research community.

'Theories' and 'methods' are referred to here in the plural. It is not the purpose of this report to advocate any specific theory or method. Views on the appropriate theoretical underpinning for career guidance activities change over time and respond to the distinctive social and cultural traditions of different countries. Career guidance specialist practitioners need a broad historical and cross-cultural knowledge of their theoretical field, and an understanding of the different methods of delivery of career guidance services that reflect different theoretical standpoints. They need to be able to relate this knowledge and understanding to the economic, social and cultural conditions in their own country, and to the broader European and international context. This constitutes a distinctive body of professional knowledge for career development and career guidance, which draws on – and contributes to – a range of other academic disciplines (including psychology, education, economics and social studies), but with a specific focus on progression in learning and work within the individual's life course.

Each country needs to address the question of how extensive the specialised element within the overall training should be. In those countries where graduate-level training is established, such as Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and the UK, the typical minimum duration of specialised study is one year (or its part-time equivalent), a period reflected in countries such as Malta where new courses are being introduced. The year of specialised study may be free-standing, or incorporated within a three/four-year first-cycle higher education programme. It may include practical experience, or be followed by an induction period in the workplace where final accreditation is confirmed. The exact nature and pattern of study and accreditation should be the subject of national debate. Overall, though, there is evidence in existing training provision to suggest that the equivalent of one year of full-time higher education, or 60 ECTS credits, is an appropriate benchmark from which to start such debate.

3.1.3. Promoting mobility

It is noteworthy that the current training for the career guidance profession, which Cedefop and Sultana (2004, p. 76) note is 'ironically … increasingly called upon to promote … Europe-wide mobility and "boundaryless" careers', leaves it ill-placed in enabling its own members to make such moves between Member States.

A further function of career guidance is in support of European strategies to improve vertical mobility in the workforce, which involves enabling access to the accreditation of experience and learning, as well as providing access to new learning opportunities. With regard to its own workforce, career guidance – perceived both as a professional activity and a policy tool – needs to ensure that any actions to define sufficiency, as outlined above, are sensitive to the need for progression pathways, including those from paraprofessional roles to full professional status. It should also respect the valuable contribution made by non-formal and informal delivery mechanisms, particularly, for example, in outreach activity with marginalised or disadvantaged groups. Accreditation of prior experience and learning

(APEL) needs to be considered in relation to entry requirements, to parts of a training course, and to the whole course (as is intended in the Danish real competences approach).

3.1.4. Continuing professional development

The emphasis of the preceding discussion has been on initial training at the point of entry to the professional role. However, continuing professional development (CPD) is also extremely important, both in refreshing and maintaining the currency of knowledge and skills, and in supporting career advancement. There is little evidence in the data collected for this study that countries have sound systems for CPD which maintain the competences of people in their existing role, although this is an essential element in the management of the quality of service delivery. There is rather more evidence of the development of opportunities for professional advancement, such as master's degrees.

3.2. Teaching methods using distance and e-learning

Where the opportunity arose, the study took note of initiatives that use distance and e-learning methodologies to deliver training for career guidance practitioners. The use of ICT in such learning opportunities, and indeed in career guidance services, has its own extensive and detailed literature, and examination of this literature in any depth is beyond the scope of this study. However, existing initiatives can provide ideas and inspiration to others.

(a) The public employment service (AMS) in Austria offers induction training for new entrants through a telecourse, as an alternative to traditional delivery. Specially trained coaches use state-of-the-art Internet and intranet facilities to support learners. This delivery method lengthens the typical training period from 40 to 52 weeks. It is currently a pilot project, but is seen as indicating a future trend, potentially increasing both the flexibility of the training and the self-responsibility of the learner.

In the Czech Republic, the eKariera e-learning course was developed through ESF funding in the period 2006-08. The core target group is school teachers and school counsellors, but it has also been used by labour office counsellors and others. The resource includes support by trained study advisers. It covers basic knowledge of career guidance, with a good proportion of time focused on 'the world of work'.

The universities in Finland which are delivering postgraduate career guidance counsellor training are making use of digital portfolios for reflective learning and in assessment. Finland has also initiated a programme of training that will have delivered a minimum one week of training in the use of ICT in guidance to over six hundred guidance counsellors by 2008. The content of this training has also been integrated in the initial training programmes.

Course materials for postgraduate diplomas at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, are now largely web-based and highly interconnected, so that when a topic arises in one module, it is hot-linked to occurrences elsewhere in the course content. Internet-based delivery also means that the materials are freely available for distance study.

Also in Ireland, the National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) offers a continuing professional development (CPD) programme for guidance counsellors (working in second level schools) in whole school guidance planning. The programme consists of three modules, each offered over a three-month period, delivered using an action research approach. The

programme employs a blended learning approach i.e. a combination of workshops and e-learning. Guidance counsellors who successfully complete all three modules receive a special purpose diploma at level 8 of the 10-level Irish national framework of qualifications (NFQ).

Poland has created an e-learning platform for vocational counsellors, the Multimedia Workshop Centre, which aims to help career guidance counsellors to improve their qualifications.

E-guidance features in a master's course which has its main focus on e-counselling. This development in Germany, by Georg-Simon-Ohm-Hochschule in collaboration with the Grundig Akademie Nuremberg, focuses on international standards and is developed for German-speaking countries. Topics are wide-ranging, and include the study of electronic media in the context of guidance.

3.3. Practicum

The term 'practicum' is used here in a generic and inclusive sense to cover both the use of employment workplace experiences, for those who are undertaking training while in employment, and the use of short-term work-experience placements and internships that may be arranged by the course organisers for full-time students. Work-experience placements can either be loose and observational in nature, or can be a vehicle for practice which is then the base for either reflective learning (perhaps through specific case studies, for example) or for actual assessment tasks relating to qualification. Such tasks might be observed and assessed interviews or group-work sessions, detailed and reflective case studies of the student's experience, or case studies of, for example, occupations (job studies) and labour market information.

Practicum occupies a place in the overlap between academic study and competence-based accreditation, and is therefore pertinent to both aspects of this study. Contributors reported many different instances of its use, although it should also be noted that a significant number of contributors indicated that no particular links were made between theoretical study and practical experience in the training provision they outlined.

The most developed example of the integration of theoretical learning and practicum is in the University of Applied Science of the *Bundesagentur für Arbeit* (BA) based in Mannheim, Germany. This is described as follows: 'In order to link the theory and practice as closely together as possible the study course has a dual structure. Five trimesters of university study are complemented by four trimesters of internship, supervised by the university (project work). These are undertaken in departments of the *Bundesargentur für Arbeit* (BA) in companies and other organisations. Placements abroad are also possible'.

In Ireland, some courses (at NUI Maynooth) place strong emphasis on reflective practice. A key element of the assessment for the adult guidance diploma is four transcribed and reflective accounts of real interviews with real clients. NCGE's CPD programme, using an action research approach (see Section 3.2.), specifically addresses the development of reflective practice.

From Sweden, a university-based trainer reports an interest in the balance between practical training and academic study. The degree course concerned has about 20 weeks of

practicum spread over three years of training, with progression in the different tasks that students undertake. These include interviews with Swedish people and immigrants, which are then analysed and presented at the university, plus group and individual interventions that are recorded on video and presented in seminars. Tutors also visit the student's workplace on at least two occasions to observe an interview which is assessed (and may be approved or not).

In France, training for the role of *Conseiller d'orientation psychologue* (COP) includes a 16-week placement in a guidance centre (CIO) and six to eight weeks in an enterprise. Both placements are used to produce evidence for the final assessment.

The recently developed master's course in Latvia is the result of wide international consultation. It integrates practical training into each module and includes a clear statement of purpose for this: 'the aim of practical training is to facilitate the development of the student career counsellor's professional competence, characterised by the skill to work with clients professionally and creatively and to have an analytical-evaluative attitude towards the counsellor's work' (see case study on Latvia in Section 4.5.).

In Bulgaria, the master's degree incorporates the competence-based global career development facilitator (GCDF) to provide a practicum, including an assessed case study (see case study on Bulgaria in Section 4.2.).

Vocational guidance psychologists in Finland's employment offices are required to have a master's degree that includes the highest possible grade in psychology. Their induction programme, which includes information about changes in society and labour markets, then requires them to spend one to two weeks in a work placement outside the employment service.

In Scotland, a new postgraduate professional qualification has been developed that places an emphasis on practice-based learning. All students at the three universities offering the course are assigned a practice tutor by Careers Scotland, the national career guidance organisation. The practice tutors act as mentors and experts for the duration of the course, and contribute to students' individual learning plans and professional development (see case study on Scotland in Section 4.7.).

Less detail is recorded about several other instances where a practicum is actively used, or under consideration:

- degree courses in human resource development in the Netherlands, with an optional specialism in career counselling, have an assessment process which includes transcripts of tapes and a 'test of competence' These courses are structured so that the third of the four years is spent on a work placement;
- in Poland, some degrees have a work placement of about eight weeks;
- in Iceland, the element of practical training is being developed as the course moves from being a postgraduate diploma to become a master's degree.

3.4. Labour market and occupational knowledge

Knowledge of the opportunities available to individual citizens is a crucial element in delivering career guidance services to help them make informed choices about their own

futures. Understanding the labour market and specific occupations is a significant element within this, but is frequently not addressed to the necessary depth in training courses:

'Many people are aware of the growing flexibility of the labour market and the need to be familiar with that market to provide the best possible help to the client coming to the service. Few people, however, know enough about the job opportunities and possible openings.' (Cedefop, Chiousse and Werquin, 1999, p. 58)

Watts (1992) defines 'information management' as covering four broad areas:

- education and training opportunities;
- careers and occupations;
- the labour market;
- support services (such as financial support, child-care and helping agencies).

The term 'information management' deserves some consideration. Collecting and storing information has frequently moved towards being a specialist role, particularly where extensive use is made of web-based facilities. However, the career guidance practitioner working with clients needs three distinct capabilities: first, a sound grasp of the frameworks of and broad progression routes through and between education, training and employment; second, the capability to locate and access relevant detailed information on such opportunities to meet identified needs; and third, the capability to share this information with their clients in a way that is appropriate to individual needs and that enhances the clients' future capability to access information independently.

Many factors serve to inhibit adequate coverage of occupational and labour market information. Much career guidance is delivered within the education system – in schools, vocational training institutions, higher education and adult education – often by people whose own career has progressed from student to teacher without significant experience of other labour market sectors. Those providing career guidance services within the public employment services have commonly moved directly from education to public-service employment without exposure to the commercial and industrial sectors where much employment is located. Almost all providers of career guidance services work in large organisations, which differ considerably from the small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that form an important element of the European economy. The small number of people providing career development services in the private sector may have more knowledge of this sector, but their services are often available only to limited groups, and their interaction with public career guidance services may not be extensive.

Public employment services offer services to employers as well as job-seekers, so the role of their staff in processing vacancies can serve to develop the staff's occupational knowledge, and their understanding of the organisations within which vacancies occur. In a few cases, such knowledge is consciously developed. The degree programmes of the University of Applied Science of the BA (Germany) include significant labour market studies. In the Czech Republic, Labour Office counsellors are specifically responsible both for employment brokerage and for entry to vocational training; in many other instances, the roles of counselling and of work placement are separated from one another. In Belgium (both Flemish and French communities), these services are delivered by different divisions within

the PES. In Finland, there are two roles within the PES, with different entry qualifications and training.

Some training courses have taken steps to strengthen attention to labour market issues. In Latvia, the new master's degree includes substantial coverage of the labour market, occupations and the culture of employing organisations, with practical training involving both observation and research. In both Denmark and Malta, new training and work arrangements bring those involved with education services and the labour market closer together. In Romania, the information and career counselling project, with World Bank funding, created 100 new occupational profiles during the period 2005-08 (though this compares, for example, with more than 700 job profiles available online through the UK's Learndirect careers advice service).

Some countries, however, lack a national system for collecting and analysing information on the labour market and occupations. Several, particularly the newer EU Member States, report the development of classifications of occupations and trades, although this can be a lengthy task. Both Greece and Iceland identify the lack of national systems for labour market data collection and analysis as an inhibiting factor to any ambition that trainers might have to introduce labour market knowledge in the training of career guidance practitioners.

3.5. Professional identity

The interrelationship of work roles and career guidance tasks was explored earlier (Section 2.1.), where it was noted that problems can arise when career guidance is delivered as a sub-specialism within another main work role. The main problems are: lower priority among other work pressures; lack of visibility to potential users; and difficulty for policy-makers in identifying and monitoring the extent and impact of career guidance services.

Arthur (2008) also discusses the issue of professional identity. The term career guidance practitioner may have different meanings within different guidance communities and be more or less accepted as representative of professional identity. A major challenge in developing standards of practice is the issue of applicability to a broad range of practitioners across a broad range of practice settings. For example, the disparity of roles and tasks performed by career guidance practitioners poses a challenge in defining the core components of practice; common standards of practice need to be defined as a foundation for all practitioners. In turn, the public can have expectations about the basic qualification standards held by practitioners in any area of career development practice.

There are signs of change towards a more distinctive identity in a few countries. The new *Ungdommens Uddannelsesvejledning* (UU) youth career guidance centres in Denmark provide a distinctive location and staff identity for career guidance. Those who have chosen to meet the compulsory qualification requirements to work in the UU have abandoned any previous professional role and now typically identify themselves as career guidance practitioners. In Malta, training routes which prepare for both public employment service and education-based work will serve to reduce former barriers between services and strengthen a sense of common professional identity. In Norway, reorganisation of school-based careers education and career counselling into two specialised strands, with career guidance

separated from social/personal counselling, will increase visibility and a separate professional identity.

The situation is more mixed in the United Kingdom. Career guidance services in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have been structured to provide all-age delivery, under distinctive branding such as Careers Scotland and Careers Wales. Conversely, in England the career guidance work with young people risks losing a distinctive identity, and work with adults is undergoing further structural change which is likely to lead to redesign of services.

Several contributors to this study made reference to national classifications of occupations, which, in some cases, were a relatively new development. Some contributors mentioned that career guidance was not a formally recognised occupation in their country's classification of occupations: inclusion in such classifications could be an important step towards recognition of career guidance as a distinct role in those countries where it is emerging as such.

Other factors may militate against progress to a separate and distinctive profession. Until now, in Portugal, most guidance and counselling psychology graduates serving the education sector have been based in schools, although adopting a lifelong and life-wide approach to their work. Consideration is now being given to placing these psychologists in centres outside the school, elsewhere within their municipalities. Many of them consider this a retrograde step as it distances them from their client group and makes access to their services more difficult for the school-going population. In addition, previously their work conditions were similar to teachers in schools; this has now changed and their weekly time schedule has increased by a considerable percentage. A similar issue has arisen in Romania, where a change of status for school-based career staff, proposed in a recent education law, would involve loss of teachers' conditions of employment (including generous non-contact hours and holiday entitlements), and their replacement by a standard 40-hour week and a smaller amount of paid holiday entitlement. Staff affected are contesting this decision. Issues of employment status, and the professional identity of career guidance practitioners, are frequently addressed by professional associations acting in the interests of members, their clients and the profession generally. In some countries, such professional associations have a long history; in others, new ones are being formed as increasing numbers of people become engaged in career guidance practice.

3.6. Challenges in developing career guidance services

This section has explored a number of questions about the development of career guidance services, particularly in relation to the staff resource that is essential to high quality in-service delivery. There is encouraging movement, outlined in Section 2, towards more extensive provision of specialised training at higher academic levels. However, such encouraging movement is not universal, and there are a few examples of stasis or backward movement. There remains scope for developing a broad Europe-wide consensus on an adequate standard for specialised training for career guidance practitioners.

Teaching methods and course content offer much scope for development: in labour-market and occupational knowledge, in effective use of practical training to gain (and reflect on) first-hand experience and to develop skills, and in the use of diverse teaching

methodologies. The last of these includes using technology both to enhance on-campus learning (for example, through digital portfolios, as in Finland) and to provide and enhance study materials for distance use (as in Ireland). There are, however, discernible steps being taken to address these issues, in the directions proposed in the reports of the various studies conducted by the OECD or using the OECD methodology (Watts and Sultana, 2004). Examples of innovative practice exist in all the aspects of training noted above; sound evaluation and effective dissemination of the resulting findings would be valuable to the career guidance community across Europe.

4. Case studies

4.1. Introduction

This section features six case studies which provide a more detailed report of developments in particular countries. These examples have been chosen to demonstrate the ways in which different countries have approached developments that relate to career guidance services. None provides a universal blueprint for action, but all offer valuable insights based on what has been achieved and how.

Four case studies (Bulgaria, Latvia, Poland and Scotland) cover specific actions that led to the development of new training courses. These all follow the same broad structure, under headings that reflect issues which were explored in Section 3 of this report.

One case study (Denmark) explores a range of integrated actions affecting delivery systems and the associated changes to training for career guidance practitioners.

The remaining study (Ireland) reports the work to develop a national competence framework for guidance practitioners, linked to a range of associated studies and reports, including analyses of the views of, and competences needed by, users of career guidance services.

4.2. Bulgaria

4.2.1. Summary

Bulgaria offered its first master's degree in career guidance as part of developments arising from a labour market project supported by the USA. More Bulgarian universities are now planning to develop such courses.

4.2.2. Policy and legislative initiatives

Developments in professional training for career guidance practitioners in Bulgaria have taken place under the aegis of the Ministry of Education and Science's National Pedagogical Centre, through an international arrangement with the USA for a labour market project. This project has facilitated the delivery of global career development facilitator (GCDF) training to roughly a thousand practitioners in Bulgaria. An essential element of the agreement was the development of a 'train the trainers' programme to build capacity within Bulgaria.

Project staff in Bulgaria identified the need for a further progression route for those newly trained through this programme, and entered into discussions with a number of universities to explore options for this. Under the USAID labour market project, one of the country's smaller universities (Ruse University) had agreed to train one person to master's level as a future leader of the GCDF program. This university showed interest and had the flexibility to develop quickly a master's programme aligned with their existing programmes in pedagogy, social sciences and psychology. This programme started in 2006; it has had sufficient impact that two of the country's largest universities, Sofia University and the private New Bulgarian University, are both now planning similar master's programmes.

4.2.3. Changes responding to the Lisbon strategy and the Bologna process

Bulgaria has a development programme to translate its higher education courses into the procedures required by the Bologna process. The master's course at Ruse University has an ECTS rating of 74, made up of 30 credits each for the first two semesters, which are more theoretical, and a further 14 credits for the third semester, which is practice-based. In the third semester, seven of the ECTS credits are allocated to the GCDF course.

4.2.4. Entry requirements and alternative routes to entry and qualification

The normal entry requirement for the master's programme is a first-cycle higher education degree in a related area such as pedagogy, social sciences or psychology. Viability in terms of student numbers was a concern during recruitment, and a number of actions were used to attract students:

(a) approaches were made to alumni of the university with first degrees in relevant subjects;
(b) extensive coverage in a prestigious national newspaper which attracts an audience in both educational and business fields. A journalist from the newspaper accompanied a study visit to Ireland, and wrote a number of articles on career development;
(c) the same newspaper was used to advertise a competition for a number of sponsored places on the course. Entry was by essay competition;
(d) people with degrees in non-related subjects (for example, technical subjects) were invited to apply on the basis of experience of relevant work in educational counselling. Selection was based on interview and some documentation relating to their work experience, a basic implementation of accreditation of prior experience and learning (APEL).

4.2.5. The course teaching methods

The course is taught in-house at the university. Practical training in individual counselling and running group sessions is assessed in part through use of the GCDF framework. Practical work with real users of career guidance services therefore contributes to assessment and accreditation in the academic system.

4.2.6. Coverage of labour market, occupational and other opportunity information

There is good coverage of labour market information and trends, with a focus on a research-based approach to the labour market changes arising from the transition from a command to a free-market economy. There is also coverage of the need to interface with employers, including exploration of their future skill needs, and helping employers develop programmes such as internships to attract suitable applicants.

There is some focus on specific occupational information, with work on occupational profiles and job requirements. Bulgaria is developing a national system of professions and occupations; over time this is intended to include detail of job tasks and to link with information on training routes.

4.2.7. Professional identity

Three factors contribute to raising awareness of career guidance as a specialist profession, one being inclusion in the national system of professions and occupations. The second is the considerable coverage achieved through the national newspaper, which has widened the awareness of the general public as well as those in related professional areas. The third is the establishment of a new national professional association, the National Association of Career Counsellors, initiated and actively supported by the team which led the GCDF implementation programme.

4.3. Denmark

4.3.1. Summary

In recent years, Denmark has changed the structures through which much of its career guidance provision is delivered. Subsequent changes have increased the extent of academic training for career guidance practitioners and created a more distinctive professional identity for career guidance.

4.3.2. Policy and legislative initiatives

A Danish 'guidance reform' took place in 2004. School-based career guidance teachers were abolished and replaced by guidance specialists in cross-municipal youth guidance centres, known as *Ungdommens Uddannelsesvejledning* (UU), and by higher education guidance centres, known as *Studievalg*. The changes followed a number of influential national and international studies which were conducted in the early 2000s, including Denmark's participation in the OECD review (2004) and a national report on the state of career guidance. Both strongly criticised the perceived lack of professionalism among guidance counsellors. The 20 different, but parallel, training routes at that time, most within educational guidance, were seen as representing duplication and lacking coordination: this constituted a waste of resources, as much of this training (up to 400 hours, but most much shorter) was conducted on a peer-learning basis and was of varied quality. An exception to this was the (now) Danish University of Education, which trained career guidance teachers within a nationally acknowledged curriculum framework at diploma level.

4.3.3. Diploma-level training

From 2004, almost all these different training routes were replaced by a single basic training diploma-level course for guidance practitioners across most sectors (originally 30 ECTS points, later lengthened to 60 ECTS points (see Figure1)). This training route now attracts some 200 students per year, and is offered at six regional university colleges: they represent slightly different courses, but within the same centrally-issued curricular guidelines.

This level of competences became compulsory by law for guidance practitioners in UU and *Studievalg*, but only after some years of lobbying. Key players in developing the training include the Ministry of Education, the regional university colleges (which provide the training), the Danish Joint Council of Associations in Educational and Vocational Guidance

(FUE), and the Danish University of Education. Experts from these organisations formed the task groups which prepared the curriculum; this is equivalent to one year of full-time studies (60 ECTS points) but is usually taken as part-time studies over two years.

Figure 1. **Career guidance curriculum for the basic diploma course (delivered at six regional university colleges)**

The programme includes three obligatory modules (nine ECTS points each):

Career guidance and the guidance practitioner (guidance theories and methodologies, ethics, ICT in guidance, etc.). The student will acquire:

(i) insight into theories on choice, guidance and career development and on guidance methods;

(ii) competences for developing, planning and evaluating guidance activities for children, youth and adults with different guidance needs;

(iii) knowledge of complex guidance activities, and ethics in guidance.

Career guidance and the individual (different target groups, human development, learning theories, etc.). The student will acquire:

(i) insight into psychology and social development, cultural and individual differences in relation to career development, including specific target groups;

(ii) competences in relation to accreditation of prior learning, and career goal-setting;

(iii) insight into own professional values.

Career guidance and society (labour market conditions and policies, the education system and educational policies, development of society and business, etc.). The student will acquire:

(i) knowledge of global trends and their influence on societies and individuals in terms of career development;

(ii) insight into the national educational system with a focus on guidance;

(iii) insight into private and public labour market trends with a focus on guidance, innovation and entrepreneurship.

It also includes two other modules (nine ECTS points each) where students can choose among several topics, such as:

- career decision-making in theory and practice;
- research and development, quality assurance and management in guidance;
- innovation and entrepreneurship;
- adult guidance;
- guidance for young people with special needs.

Finally, it includes a written final examination (15 ECTS).

Source: Based on: http://eng.uvm.dk/guidance/Diploma%20programme.htm and extended by Peter Plant.

Attempts to introduce a bachelor's level degree have come to fruition in 2008 with a programme in public administration (210 ECTS) at three university colleges. The programme includes a 90 ECTS specialisation in career guidance, including a practicum of 20 ECTS. The programme offers a qualification route for younger people aiming at the career guidance profession, alongside a number of other possible specialisations such as human resource management, social work and employment management. This, along with a postgraduate diploma in employment management introduced in 2007 at five university colleges, marks the opening of a qualification route for people in the public employment sector, with their training sitting alongside that of other career professionals.

4.3.4. Master of career guidance, candidate and PhD training

One step up the educational hierarchy, aimed at leaders of guidance units, researchers, developers, and policy-makers, a master's degree in career guidance is offered at the Danish University of Education. This is a four-module, 60 ECTS points course, over two years, which attracts mature students with substantial experience in career guidance and related fields: approximately 30-50 students per year. The four modules are: career guidance and career development theories; career guidance, society, and guidance policies; career guidance methods; and a master's thesis.

In addition, as a remnant from the German-inspired study structures of pre-Bologna times, a candidate's degree (Cand.Paed. with a specialisation in career guidance) is offered at the Danish University of Education. It is a 60-ECTS-points course, which attracts some 20-30 students per year from a wide array of guidance-related fields.

Finally, five or six career guidance students are studying for a PhD degree at the Guidance Research Unit of the Danish University of Education: this is the largest number ever. These carefully selected students are likely to represent the coming generation of Danish guidance researchers.

The overall picture is one of major investments, in terms of finance and time, in the professionalisation of guidance counsellors across several sectors in Danish career guidance. These are the formal training routes, and together they represent a major lift in the competences of guidance counsellors, even at the basic diploma level. They represent what the OECD study (2004) labelled 'specialised career guidance qualifications' in its five-part typology of training routes.

4.3.5. Changes responding to the Lisbon strategy and the Bologna process

The policy goals of the Lisbon strategy, with its emphasis on economic growth and competitiveness in an international knowledge economy, have been reflected in the aims of Danish guidance policies and in the reform of guidance structures in 2004. Greater emphasis on preventing educational drop-out, on swifter study routes, and on more direct links between education and employment, including self-employment and entrepreneurship, has been pronounced since the early 2000s. More specifically, in terms of the contents of the training of guidance professionals, one of the new modules in the longer, 60-ECTS-points training route (from 2007) was on 'entrepreneurship in guidance'. This was no accident, as the module heading was dictated by the Ministry of Education. In addition, employability, and

the transition from training and education to work, are now of greater importance in training career guidance staff.

The Bologna process, in relation to training career guidance professionals, has been reflected in the rewriting of the curriculum in terms of learning goals and outcomes (see example in Figure 1 above), quality-assurance systems and continuous evaluation of specific courses. Other overall Bologna process policy goals, for example relating to mobility and transferability of competences across national borders, have been of less importance, as few Danish guidance counsellors travel with their profession across any kind of border, be it geographical or sectoral.

4.3.6. Entry requirements and alternative routes to entry and qualification

Candidates for these training routes must hold qualifications at least within the first cycle of higher education; more for higher-level courses. All candidates must have at least two years of professional experience, and most have more.

Since 2007, access through APEL is an option: for entry, for elements within the course, and as an alternative route for full course qualification. Interestingly, the APEL route is not seen as an alternative: it is an integrated part of the continuous upgrading of the competences of guidance counsellors. This implies that already-employed guidance counsellors are routinely engaged in their personal APEL to fulfil the qualification requirements of their present working position. Some find this aggravating, as it may imply that they are not capable and need more training to do their daily job. A highly detailed APEL procedure has been developed for this purpose by the same expert group. It includes portfolio methods, self-evaluation, observations, essays, and in-depth interviews, all with a view to the candidate demonstrating relevant career counselling and guidance skills, and a general overview and understanding of the guidance field, its methods, policies, and challenges.

4.3.7. The course teaching methods

Little use is made of e-learning methods, which are limited to ICT platforms such as Blackboard, which allows for group emailing, streaming, group discussions, etc. More sophisticated distance learning modes have not yet been developed as part of these courses, and there are no plans to develop them. This is often explained by the small size of country but distance learning these days is not only about distance: it is about flexible learning modes, a view developed in the Nordic region, particularly in evaluations of national and European projects which demonstrate that training, reflective exercises, essay writing and assessment can all be delivered by these means.

Practicum periods are not included in the present courses, as the proposed bachelor's degree mentioned above does not yet exist and, on the whole, there is an academic drift at all levels: the thesis requirements in terms of the level of abstract thinking and rigorous academic analysis have been growing in recent years, even at the diploma level. This is one of the – possibly inevitable – consequences of a higher degree of professionalisation. One of the few places where work-based experiences are used as the basis for assessment of the competences of guidance staff is as part of the above-mentioned APEL procedure.

4.3.8. Coverage of labour market, occupational and other opportunity information

To some degree, all courses cover labour market and wider societal issues related to the role of guidance. Opportunity information, in a narrow sense, is rarely given much attention, as this is seen as basic knowledge and is available via the well-developed dedicated Internet sites and professional periodicals for guidance seekers and professionals.

Entrepreneurship is one of the modules of the diploma-level course. The courses at the Danish School of Public Administration offer a more administrative and employment-oriented training route. At present, the public employment service does not prioritise the guidance component of their services, and thus the previously well-developed in-service PES training has little to offer in terms of career guidance, supervision, interpersonal skills training, etc. This is unfortunate, particularly when contrasted with the former 20-30 weeks of solid in-service PES training which offered a major counselling and guidance skills training component and supervision.

Paradoxically, and partly as an answer to these difficulties, a number of private training providers are now selling their services to the PES, jobcentres and other actors in the field: their short courses offer an introduction to specific areas of career guidance and counselling, such as systemic coaching, appreciative inquiry, or solution-focused approaches.

4.3.9. Professional identity

Since the 1970s, teachers have been the main professional group in career guidance. This is still the case to some degree, but there has been a deliberate policy swing away from this group, favouring a new group of guidance specialists, with their own specialist training, as depicted above. Many of these 'new' specialists are former guidance teachers who have upgraded their formal qualifications and taken up a full-time career in guidance, in contrast to the former dual/part-time professionals who continue to perform their guidance responsibilities alongside broader teaching responsibilities. When psychometric testing was the main guidance method (from 1880s to 1960s), professionalism was in the hands of psychologists: teachers in guidance were merely seen as humble helpers in the guidance process. This situation changed radically in the 1960s and 1970s, when career guidance teachers were introduced as the main basic professional group in most guidance sectors. Now Denmark seems to be on its way to a more balanced view, where there is a perceived need for both career guidance specialists and for teachers; the latter have a particular role in careers education, which is the foundation for lifelong guidance.

4.4. Ireland

4.4.1. Summary

Ireland established a National Guidance Forum after policy attention was focused on career guidance during the OECD (2004) review and the Irish EU Presidency. Its work has addressed quality assurance of services and the competence of career guidance staff. It has also paid attention to the voice of citizens, both seeking their views and undertaking a study to define the career competences which citizens need.

4.4.2. The National Guidance Forum

The National Guidance Forum, a joint initiative of the Minister for Education and Science and of the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, was launched at an international guidance conference during the Irish Presidency of the European Union in April 2004. The OECD review had previously examined how guidance services can help advance important public-policy objectives, with a particular focus on the contribution that guidance makes to lifelong learning, economic development, labour market efficiency and social cohesion. For the purposes of the OECD review, career guidance was defined as 'services intended to assist individuals, of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers' (OECD, 2004, p. 19). However, it is important to note that in some countries, including at post-primary level in Ireland, career guidance and personal counselling form an integrated service.

Ireland's national development plan (2000-06) set out four key areas for social and economic development. Within the area related to education and training development, there was reference to improving guidance in second-level, further and adult education. In 2001, a national seminar held during the OECD review visit showed the value of bringing the key players in guidance together to address issues of common concern. One of the recommendations of the review team was to create an Irish guidance forum, to strengthen joint and cooperative work between the major guidance providers.

In August 2003, the Department of Education and Science (DES) requested that the National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) should coordinate the establishment of a national guidance forum. NCGE established a steering group, and it was considered essential that the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) be fully involved, along with representatives of DES, FÁS and the Institute of Guidance Counsellors. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development joined the steering group after the forum was established.

The agreed objectives of the forum were to:

(a) ensure that guidance becomes central to the public policy and planning process in education, the labour market and social strategies;
(b) develop, communicate and implement meaningful models of guidance that underpin a vision of personal fulfilment, a fair society and sustainable employability;
(c) urgently harness and proactively manage the wealth of existing guidance resources and agree mechanisms for measuring relevant and realistic outcomes;
(d) move from fragmented guidance provision to a cohesive multi-faceted professional, accessible service, responsive to the needs of the individual and society.

4.4.3. Outcomes

Outcomes from the National Guidance Forum were extensive:

(a) a national lifelong guidance framework, outlining the knowledge, skills and competences that guidance aims to develop among individuals at different times of their lives;
(b) a report on a scoping exercise on guidance services available in education, the labour market, and, to a more limited extent, the community;
(c) a competence framework for guidance practitioners;

(d) a quality framework for guidance services;
(e) a coherent framework of organisational structures to deliver a coordinated and comprehensive lifelong guidance service;
(f) a report on a consultation with the general public.

The first outcome resulted in a document that identifies the separate strands and stages in individual development. In the Irish national lifelong guidance framework, it is proposed that there will be four groups of personal outcomes, each explained through more detailed statements of knowledge, skills and competences ([6]): emotional development; social development; learning development; and career development.

The third outcome above resulted in a competence framework covering career guidance and personal counselling, one of several that informed the development of the competence framework in the present report. This framework included one main area (out of five) covering labour market education and training, and embedded preparation for employability in some others. Training centres had previously not always placed emphasis on labour market knowledge, partly through the expectation that such a constantly changing area was better covered through continuing professional development (CPD). It is now viewed as a positive development that labour market knowledge is included in the National Guidance Forum's competence framework and that, in at least one case, a new module is being introduced into a postgraduate training course. The coordinating group for the postgraduate courses in Ireland pays attention to labour market and occupational awareness as an important element within training courses.

4.4.4. The voice of the citizen

Ireland is unusual in having prioritised the voice of the citizen in their strategic review of guidance services. The National Guidance Forum carried out research and consultation among members of the general public to determine their experiences, opinions and recommendations about guidance services. A key outcome of this research was to find a marked similarity in how the general public and policy-makers viewed the importance of lifelong guidance ([7]).

4.5. Latvia

4.5.1. Policy and legislative initiatives

The master's study programme in career counselling in Latvia was developed as part of a wider and intensive development of career education and counselling. In 2006 a White Paper on guidance and counselling was produced by the Ministry of Welfare in collaboration with three other ministries (the Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Economics, and the

([6]) See Ireland – Framework of competences for guidance practitioners: http://www.nationalguidanceforum.ie/

([7]) Details of the consultation with the general public, along with all other outcomes from the work of the National Guidance Forum between 2004 and 2006, can be accessed at www.nationalguidanceforum.ie/publications.htm

Ministry of Regional Development), the Association of Local Governments, social partners' organisations, and guidance practitioners; it was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers. The paper covers all aspects of lifelong guidance including the mechanism for how to ensure better cooperation and coordination between key players in guidance and counselling at different levels.

The Guidance and Counselling System Cooperation Council (*Karjeras attistibas atbalsta Sadarbibas padome*) was established in September 2007 and comprises all stakeholders in guidance and counselling. The Career Guidance Department of the State Education Development Agency (VIAA) provides secretarial assistance to the council. The Public Employment Agency and the Professional Career Counselling State Agency were merged on 1 September 2007 to 'provide more targeted career guidance and job placement'.

An ESF project, which was led by VIAA and ended in September 2008, aimed at improving the accessibility of guidance provision within education. A total of 38 school boards and six higher education institutions were partners in the project, which fostered acknowledgement of a guidance practitioner as a key agent in lifelong learning and systematic careers education at all levels, and in providing support to schools on information and methodological resources.

The project has seen the development of:

(a) a careers education model including self-development, career exploration and career management;
(b) a master's study programme for guidance counsellors (including an e-platform for the study programme 'career counsellor' and two examples of theoretical materials and publications);
(c) methodological materials (seven brochures and three CDs for careers education in compulsory and secondary schools for students of grades 7-9, grades 10-12, and vocational secondary schools);
(d) information resources, including: three catalogues on education and career opportunities; a national database on learning opportunities, which should be a widely accessible electronic information tool for different target groups to be connected with the European Commission's portal *Ploteus II* in 2009; self-assessment tests for e-guidance; and five DVDs on career opportunities in five selected economic sectors.

This shows that a lifelong guidance strategy has been established in Latvia, of which the master's programme is a key element. Future developments include school career guidance centres managed by qualified guidance counsellors. The school-based guidance counsellors will also coordinate careers work, support teachers, and provide relevant information and face-to-face counselling.

The master's programme in career counselling was developed drawing on experience in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania and Poland, with considerable help from experts in some of these countries.

4.5.2. Changes responding to the Lisbon strategy and the Bologna process

The programme is based on the aim of the European Union's Lisbon strategy (2005) for the year 2010. The Latvian lifelong guidance strategy, as outlined by the 2006 White Paper, is

clearly developed within the Lisbon strategy and all its subsequent policy documents and initiatives, including the 2004 resolution of the Council of the European Union on strengthening policies, systems and practices in guidance throughout life in Europe. The second-cycle master's programme in career counselling is a key element of the Latvian strategy.

Latvia has an action plan for recognition of qualifications from other Member States and, in particular, has an agreement with Estonia and Lithuania, called the Baltic educational space, and another with Germany. Both were signed in 2001 after Latvia signed the Lisbon recognition convention ([8]).

The master's programme in career counselling is formulated in line with the Bologna process, and comprises 120 ECTS credits.

4.5.3. Entry requirements and alternative routes to entry and qualification

Entry to the two-year master's programme is dependent on either having a first-cycle bachelor's degree in education, social sciences or psychology, or a qualification as a professional psychologist, or a teacher's qualification. Alternatively, another bachelor's level programme and at least two years' experience as a career counsellor would be sufficient to apply for the course. There is also a part-time route available, which lasts 2.5 years.

4.5.4. The course teaching methods

The content of the programme is arranged in four modules: career theories; social environment and labour market; methodology of professional activities; and research. Both theoretical courses and practical training are included in each module to ensure that students obtain both knowledge and practical work experience in counselling methodology, and address issues relevant to the master's thesis.

All of the programme modules include a number of study courses, each with its own independent content. The outcomes of each course are that students will be competent as required by the Latvian standards of profession (career counsellor). Assessment takes the form of tutorials, tests, presentations at seminars, projects, accomplishment of practical work, and the examinations and tests at the end of every study course and practical training period.

The practical training is divided into five parts:

(a) research on the performance of an institution providing guidance;
(b) observation of a guidance counsellor's work;
(c) counselling practice under the supervision of a professional;
(d) research related to the master's thesis, and application of theoretical and practical knowledge;
(e) completion of the research and counselling.

([8]) See: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/Recognition/LRC_en.asp [cited 28.11.2008].

4.5.5. Coverage of labour market, occupational and other opportunity information

The aim of the labour market and employment module is to help students to obtain knowledge about the structure of the labour market and its key characteristics. Students acquire an understanding of how the labour market is developing, and gain insights into unemployment as a socioeconomic and psychological problem. Finally, students will understand labour relations issues in the private and public sectors, and will have the skill to find the necessary information in the legislation of the Republic of Latvia regarding employment and taxes related to employment issues.

Within the module, the students become acquainted with labour market developments and current issues in Latvia and other EU Member States. They have an opportunity to practise forecasting labour market trends. They also study how to analyse issues related to obtaining opportunity information and its use in practice in career education; this includes the provision of support to the client in comparing his or her individual abilities and skills with the competences required in potential occupations.

4.5.6. Professional identity

Successful students will be awarded an MA(Ed) degree in education and the career counsellor's professional qualification (code 241213 of the profession catalogue of the Republic of Latvia). Whether the career counsellor's qualification will become a licence to practise is still under discussion.

4.6. Poland

4.6.1. Summary

Poland introduced its first postgraduate course in career guidance at the University of Łódź more than a decade ago. Subsequent changes and the widespread development of courses in Poland are outlined here.

4.6.2. Policy and legislative initiatives

The initial establishment of postgraduate training in career guidance in Poland arose primarily from the need to help society move from 'allocation' in employment to 'choice'. In 1993, the National Labour Office ruled that until professional university courses were available to train career counsellors, only graduates with a master's degree, preferably in psychology, pedagogy or sociology, could be employed as career counsellors.

In 1994, the first postgraduate course in career guidance was developed by the University of Łódź, on the initiative of the Minister for Labour and Social Policy as part of the World Bank project TOR 8. The university designed the programme with help from experts in the UK (Manchester) and Ireland (Dublin). A university curriculum for career counselling was introduced in 1997 based on the programme developed by the University of Łódź, and, since then, other institutions have sought assistance from staff at the university to develop postgraduate programmes. This university curriculum is now being offered by at least 10 universities.

The more recent rapid growth in postgraduate courses in Poland arose from the need to train more careers counsellors to meet the large increase in the provision of vocational counselling, underpinned by legislation in education, employment and youth services. In 2003, the Ministry of National Education and Sport produced a regulation governing the organisation of psychological and educational support in public kindergartens, schools and educational institutions, introducing career guidance into schools. In 2004/05, the Ministry of Education developed career guidance programmes for schools, which required teachers to be trained to deliver career counselling. To assist this, the Ministry of Education developed a framework for postgraduate studies and made grants available to promote and support the development of postgraduate programmes, cofinanced with the European Social Fund (ESF). Careers counsellors were gradually introduced into schools having undertaken part-time training over 12 to 18 months.

Since the law requires that all careers counsellors are graduates of higher education (university), postgraduate studies in career guidance counselling have recently been developed by approximately 30 universities. Most of these programmes last for three semesters (1.5 years). Almost a half of the private universities in Poland have developed courses, as this was seen as an emerging market, with many universities able to offer free postgraduate studies for career guidance counsellors drawing on EU cofinancing under the European Social Fund.

The programmes differ. In most cases, the universities developed the programmes themselves, based on existing models and curricula from the Ministry of Labour or Ministry of Education; in other cases, they have used external experts to support this process. Specialist courses are being designed, such as one in career guidance for working with clients with disabilities, which will have a medical focus.

4.6.3. Changes responding to the Lisbon strategy and Bologna process

As yet, neither the Bologna process nor the Lisbon strategy has impacted on the delivery of the postgraduate course at the University of Łódź. The course is based on subjects, not modules. There is a credit transfer system in place at the university which currently covers those on undergraduate programmes and exchange students on the Socrates programme.

4.6.4. Entry requirements and alternative routes to entry and qualification

Entrants to the postgraduate course at the University of Łódź must have a master's degree in social sciences, such as sociology, psychology or pedagogy, and normally one or two years of work experience. Undergraduate study gives a sufficient academic basis for specialisation in career guidance, but there are no exceptions to the requirement for a master's qualification. However, it was decided to broaden this out to include very motivated applicants who do not have work experience; these undertake a one-month placement in an organisation offering career guidance, such as a labour office or private careers company. There is no accreditation of prior learning or prior experiential learning for entry to the programme, or any exemption from studying subject areas once on it.

Other institutions have established their own entry requirements, which may be different from these.

4.6.5. Course teaching methods

At the University of Łódź, e-learning is not used for this course. Students use e-mail to communicate with tutors and students, to access course materials and to participate in discussion forums online, but there is no virtual learning environment.

The postgraduate course at the University of Łódź includes a one-month work-experience placement which usually takes place during the holiday between the second and third semesters. It can be at a variety of locations, including:

- a school where a careers counsellor is employed;
- a human resources (HR) division of a company;
- a careers centre;
- a labour office.

The contact at the location, who organises the placement – generally the employer or careers counsellor in a school – will write an assessment of the student. The learners complete a diary about their experiences on a daily basis, which is subsequently read by the tutor and discussed with the student. Experience gained at the placement can be used in writing the final 30/40-page thesis, which can be based around a practical theme such as 'developing a policy to promote career guidance in schools'.

4.6.6. Coverage of labour market, occupational and other opportunity information

The postgraduate course at the University of Łódź is divided into a number of subjects delivered partly through lectures and partly through workshops. Labour market information is covered in knowledge of occupations and the world of work, and vocational information management. Students also deliver a presentation on the job market.

The syllabus is updated regularly to take account of new challenges. The topic 'working with the older population' was recently added to try to combat discrimination experienced by older people in the labour market. Similarly, issues around entry to the labour market are explored through the topic of multiculturalism.

Learners are introduced to a range of sources of information, both electronic and hard copy, including:

- relevant websites on the Internet;
- information provided by the Ministry of Labour, notably an extensive database of occupational information updated annually.

Students may need to draw on sources of LMI for their thesis and to prepare materials for working with groups or individuals.

4.6.7. Professional identity

Students on the postgraduate course at the University of Łódź will join the programme with a master's degree in a specific discipline such as pedagogy but, by the end of the programme, they will see themselves more as career specialists. Joining the career counsellors' professional association, and meeting other specialists from other settings, reinforces this concept of a separate identify as a specialist career counsellor, which is a relatively new profession in Poland.

4.7. Scotland

4.7.1. Summary

Arrangements for the delivery of career guidance services in Scotland have developed differently from those in England, leading the main employer of career guidance practitioners in Scotland to work with departments of the devolved government and local universities to develop a new training course, the qualification in career guidance and development.

4.7.2. Policy and legislative initiatives

Career guidance delivery has evolved differently in the four countries that make up the United Kingdom. In Scotland, Careers Scotland, a national organisation providing all-age career guidance and employability services, has been established, funded by the Scottish Government. Careers Scotland identified a need for a professional qualification that met their needs more closely than the existing UK-wide qualification, in particular addressing:

(a) delivery of a needs-based, all-age career guidance service;
(b) the development of services provided such as enterprise and motivational 'inclusion' activities;
(c) a new emphasis on 'career planning' as a key skill to be acquired by school pupils and developed throughout life; lifetime career planning underpinning lifelong learning;
(d) working with a wider range of client groups (e.g. adults facing redundancy).

The wide consultation undertaken as part of the feasibility study indicated that the status quo was not an option, and that a broader two-year qualification at postgraduate level was required. The major employer in the country, Careers Scotland, wanted to ensure that:

- the training available was appropriate for the changing context;
- those undertaking it were better prepared to enter the working environment;
- those outside central Scotland were able to train through distance learning, particularly important for the more remote areas of the country such as the Highlands and Islands (the lack of training in these areas was impacting negatively on staff recruitment and retention; the company also wanted to increase the diversity in applicant background, since it needed to deliver services to all the communities in the country).

The steering group decided that it was important to be clear about the learning outcomes from a new qualification; consequently, between 2005 and 2007 Careers Scotland produced a subject benchmark statement, outlining the competences required of those completing professional initial training courses in career guidance in Scotland, fully reflecting the consultation process. This statement was endorsed by the professional association and the Scottish Executive, and published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for higher education. It was then used to inform the development of a new postgraduate qualification in career guidance and development.

The contract to develop the qualification was awarded to a consortium of three universities: the University of the West of Scotland (the lead institution), Napier University and Strathclyde University. The benchmark statement was used to develop the qualification, a process which took one year. An expert reference group was established to assist this process:

- advising on the content and scope of the qualification;
- considering the structure of the qualification to ensure flexibility and the use of modules for continuing professional development (CPD);
- suggesting how the learning outcomes and cross-cutting themes could be integrated into the modules;
- contributing to the development of practice-based learning as an integral part of the qualification;
- ensuring that the requirements of the qualification in career guidance (the existing UK qualification for career practitioners) were incorporated.

The validation committees at the universities were exceptionally positive about the new qualification, reflecting the part played by the major employer in the sector, but also recognising wide collaboration and innovative factors related to distance and work-based learning. A two-year programme was agreed with the second year in employment (year one leads to a postgraduate diploma (60 ECTS); year two leads to a master's award (a further 30 ECTS)). None of the modules are optional, though the programme includes considerable emphasis on individualised learning: each student has a learning plan, a practice tutor, and flexibility in the choice of placement which allows for some customisation. The employment setting in year two, as well as the flexible structure of the MSc programme, allow for more specialisation and contextualisation.

4.7.3. Changes responding to the Bologna process and the Lisbon strategy

The qualification fits into the developments within the Bologna process, because it is based on learning outcomes and credit points are awarded. The University of the West of Scotland was already strongly committed to credit accumulation and was one of the first universities in Scotland to develop a credit transfer system, prior to the Bologna declaration in 1999 ([9]). In 2007 this university validated its programmes again to credit all programmes within a framework of 20-credit modules, conforming also to the European credit transfer and accumulation system.

4.7.4. Entry requirements and alternative routes to entry and qualification

The standard entry requirement to the programme is successful completion of a first-cycle degree. However, there is flexibility, for example, where applicants can demonstrate that they have the skills, knowledge, maturity and sufficient academic attainment to achieve a postgraduate qualification. At the University of the West of Scotland all applicants are given interviews, during which previous relevant learning and experience are explored, enabling credit for prior learning and experience to be identified. Those with relevant experience but without a degree may be accepted on a case-by-case basis, where there is evidence that the applicant will be able to achieve a postgraduate qualification. Some may be asked to complete a shorter first-cycle award in social sciences prior to admission, to demonstrate their ability to study at higher education level.

([9]) See: http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/990719BOLOGNA_DECLARATION.PDF [cited 28.11.2008].

4.7.5. Course teaching methods

The universities' virtual learning environment (VLE) (Blackboard) is used to deliver e-learning. During the development phase, part of the funding was used to employ an e-developer to customise this to meet the needs of students on the new programme. All students are enrolled on a range of modules linked into the VLE and expected to use this to:

- access course materials;
- follow up references and library links (e.g. to electronic journals);
- participate in discussion forums (thus ensuring a richer experience for all learners, including those undertaking the distance learning option).

Distance learners participate through online discussions and telephone contact with their personal tutor at the university and their workplace practice tutor.

E-learning is also supported by personal development planning (PDP), with the aim of encouraging more personal reflection and consideration of employability skills. Learners on the postgraduate qualification in career guidance and development use a password-protected e-portfolio, where they document reflections from their experiences, thus encouraging their development as reflective practitioners. There is also a dedicated module on reflective guidance practice.

The initial review of training provision had identified a need to increase student understanding and experience of the workplace. This has been addressed in the postgraduate programme through:

- identification of 60 staff members from across Careers Scotland willing to act as practice tutors to support the practice-based element of the course by mentoring students;
- periods of work experience in different work settings.

The practice tutors act as 'the expert in the field' and can support the learners by offering a workplace perspective. In the first pilot year of the course, all practice tutors are staff of Careers Scotland. Contact by e-mail, phone or in person enables students to discuss details of assignments and the practice tutor to point the student in the right direction, but in a way that encourages self-reliance rather than dependency. In certain circumstances, and in consultation with the student, practice tutors may become involved with assessment at the workplace, but it is recognised that this changes the dynamics of the relationship with the learner. It is also hoped that the involvement of Careers Scotland staff in this way will facilitate the development of a professional discourse and more reflective practice within the company itself, as staff come into contact with new ideas and existing approaches are challenged.

Full-time students undertake six weeks of work-experience placements in career guidance settings during the first year of study. At the University of the West of Scotland the placements are not assessed as such, but tutors receive feedback from the workplace contact on the contribution made by the student, and the student prepares a commentary; these form the basis for a post-placement discussion between tutor and student. Work placements also provide a setting in which to practise some of the key skills in one-to-one and group work skills with clients.

4.7.6. Coverage of the labour market, occupational and other opportunity information

The item on career-related information in the benchmark statement includes skill and ability to 'interpret information and tailor it to the needs of clients, partners and key influencers'. Of particular concern to the expert reference group was the need to include how labour market information (LMI) is used in a career guidance context.

Aspects of the labour market are included throughout the benchmark statement and associated modules, which include a dedicated module on labour market studies. In addition, one of the professional practice modules includes a unit on career-related information, which enables students to explore both paper and electronic sources. Tutors ensure that sources of LMI are accessible to students when interviewing school pupils, and are now planning to ask students to undertake more in-depth research into the career options discussed in the interviews. Students also research into, and report on, a specific occupational sector, for example travel and tourism.

4.7.7. Professional identity

The qualification in career guidance and development is taught through different departments (education; social sciences; health studies) and draws substantially on these disciplines. However, the fact that career professionals are being trained separately on a bespoke postgraduate course is likely to reinforce the concept of career guidance as a separate profession. In addition, the emphasis on creating reflective practitioners, who are contributing to a body of research at postgraduate level, should enhance public perceptions of career guidance as a separate 'profession', rather than a 'job' or a specialism within another profession such as teaching or psychology.

5. Developing the competence framework

5.1. The concept of competence

As a preliminary to using the competence framework, it is necessary to explore the underlying concept of competence. Sultana (forthcoming) (10) provides a review of the issues that are relevant to uses of 'competence' and 'competence frameworks' in career guidance. Sultana traces the development of the concept and applications of competence over time and in respect to different sociocultural contexts, notably those of the USA and different traditions in European countries.

Sultana explores debates about the merits and disadvantages of competence-based approaches in learning. On the one side is the value of identifying specific skills and traits which may be related causally to good work performance, and then focusing training input to achieving mastery of these elements. Against this, there is a danger of underplaying the contribution that knowledge and understanding make to effective performance, and stifling 'creative and imaginative learning'. Knowledge is recognised as a multifaceted concept, as reflected in the European context in descriptors of both the reference levels of the European qualifications framework (EQF) and the cycles of higher education adopted within the Bologna process (the so-called 'Dublin descriptors').

Knowledge can be divided into three elements (though others suggest more: see Reid, 2007):

(a) propositional knowledge: knowing that (*savoir)*;
(b) practical knowledge: knowing how (*savoir faire)*;
(c) procedural knowledge: knowing how to be (*savoir être)*.

All these elements of knowledge need to be captured within a definition that will serve a purpose in exploring the competences needed for a professional role, enabling it to be widely accepted as being based on considerable professional autonomy and ethical practice in responding to the varied individual needs of service users.

The European Union addressed the question of defining 'competence' in the context of developing the European qualifications framework. With the formal adoption of the EQF in April 2008, it provides this definition:

'competence' means the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. In the context of the European qualifications framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy' (European Parliament, 2008, p. 4).

([10]) This thorough review of the concept of competence and the specific issues that arise in the application of competence frameworks in career guidance extends far beyond what is possible in this project report. It is strongly recommended reading for those who wish to increase their understanding of these matters or who intend to apply the competence framework proposed here in their own country or work setting.

In the absence of a formally adopted EU definition in the initiation phase of this research work, a definition from a Commission staff working document relating to the European qualifications framework (European Commission, 2005c, p. 11) was used in developing this competence framework. It is a composite definition and reflects the elements of knowledge noted earlier:

'Competence includes: (i) cognitive competence involving the use of theory and concepts, as well as informal tacit knowledge gained experientially; (ii) functional competence (skills or know-how), those things that a person should be able to do when they are functioning in a given area of work, learning or social activity; (iii) personal competence involving knowing how to conduct oneself in a specific situation; and (iv) ethical competence involving the possession of certain personal and professional values.'

These definitions emphasise a conceptualisation of competence underpinning this competence framework that is not rooted in a mechanistic subdivision of tasks into micro-skills and isolated building blocks of discrete professional tasks. It represents an integrative model of competence, which permits the identification of aspects of self-direction and reflective practice, including the important capability for professional development from novice to expert over time. It can be seen to interrelate, in different ways, with all the training traditions discussed in Section 2.2.

5.2. Designing the competence framework

5.2.1. Existing frameworks

A number of international and national frameworks already exist, having been developed through various international collaborations, transnational projects and national initiatives. A list of the relevant websites is provided in Annex 3. Principal among these frameworks are:

(a) International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG): a competence framework developed through an international research project during the period 1999-2003, this framework comprises a cluster of 11 core competences and a further 10 clusters of specialised competences, each containing between five and 11 more detailed statements of competence;

(b) European accreditation scheme (EAS): a Leonardo da Vinci-funded EU project intended to draw on IAEVG competences to develop a common accreditation scheme for European countries, this project developed its own set of five client-facing main tasks on which to base its proposed accreditation procedures;

(c) Institute of Career Certification International (ICCi)*:* an earlier framework of five core competences and a further five clusters of specialised competences was replaced in 2008 by a framework of 12 core competences and 19 selected competences;

(d) MEVOC: the quality manual for educational and vocational counselling: a Leonardo da Vinci-funded European project, led by Austria, which developed a set of standards in four competence categories, consisting of 35 competence standards in 12 groupings. The work to develop a certification system based on these standards continues through a follow-on project, the European career guidance certificate (ECGC);

(e) Canadian standards and guidelines for career development practitioners: this set of standards is highly elaborated, with a core cluster (five areas) and six areas of specialisation; each area is divided into a number of functions, which are further divided into competences;
(f) Professional standards for Australian career development practitioners: seven broad categories, subdivided into up to 10 areas, often including one which explores specialisations for that area;
(g) Ireland, framework of competences for guidance practitioners: this framework comprises five main areas, some further subdivided, and each then supported by statements of knowledge and understanding and what a practitioner will be able to do;
(h) United Kingdom national vocational qualifications (NVQs): occupational standards for advice and guidance have long been included within the UK's NVQ system. These standards have undergone several revisions since their first development in the early 1990s; currently they comprise 30 units of competence, with a small number of units being compulsory for accreditation (the exact identification of these depends on the level of the award being sought);
(i) Estonian Qualification Authority: professional standards of career counsellor, career information specialist and school career coordinator have been approved in December 2005. The standard for career counsellors was updated on the basis of a previous 2001 standard, whereas the two other standards were introduced as new in 2005.

Other standards exist or are under development, but at the time of this project none of these were available in a sufficiently complete form or in an accessible language.

Each competence framework was reviewed at the beginning of this project to identify the principles underlying its design and use. Once the draft framework had been developed by the project, it was checked in detail against each existing framework to make sure that no areas of competence considered significant elsewhere had been omitted.

5.2.2. The scope of the competence framework

Earlier studies (McCarthy, 2004; OECD, 2004; Sultana, 2003) explore the relationship between tasks and roles undertaken by those who act as career guidance practitioners. As noted (Section 2.1.), career guidance is frequently a set of tasks undertaken by someone with another main specialist role, either acting alongside those for whom it is their main job or, in some countries, as an alternative to establishing a specialised professional role. The competence framework presented here focuses only on those tasks that relate to career guidance delivery, whether as a specialism or as a sub-specialism. This distinction in roles is frequently blurred: a teacher in conversation with a pupil may cover personal, educational and career issues within one episode, and personal concerns frequently traverse such neat category distinctions.

To set boundaries for the tasks to be covered by this competence framework, it was decided to adopt the working definition of career guidance that was developed within the OECD review (2004, p. 19), and which has been widely acknowledged elsewhere. It serves as a useful definition for the purposes of this project:

‘Career guidance refers to services intended to assist people, of any age and at any point throughout their lives to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. Career guidance helps people to reflect on their ambitions, interests, qualifications and abilities. It helps them to understand the labour market and education systems, and to relate this to what they know about themselves. Comprehensive career guidance tries to teach people to plan and make decisions about work and learning. Career guidance makes information about the labour market and about educational opportunities more accessible by organising it, systematising it, and making it available when and where people need it.’

This definition helps to draw distinguishing lines between career guidance and other professional tasks, but the project also needed to consider vertical or hierarchical demarcation. Extensive work has been undertaken in other contexts to explore management competences; such competences are not included within this framework. While distinctions between practitioner tasks and management tasks (particularly when combined in the same job role) will not always be clear-cut, they are, in general, easier to draw than the distinctions between professional and supporting or paraprofessional roles. Distinctions can be guided by the definition of guidance offered above; they are further considered in some of the following sections. In general, if a task or activity contributes to career guidance as defined above, it is included within this competence framework. Issues of which job roles are ‘within scope’ need to be addressed if the competence framework is to be used to underpin the assessment and accreditation of staff competence, but it is only one of many considerations that come into play in that case. Some of these considerations are outlined in Section 7.

5.2.3. Client competences

One intended outcome of competent performance by a career guidance practitioner is that the behaviour and competences – the career management skills – of their clients should be developed. Several countries have undertaken work to define the competences needed by people within or entering the workforce, that will enable them to manage their own career effectively. Earlier work in the USA was extended in Canada to produce the blueprint for life/work designs, which was in turn developed in Australia to produce the Australian blueprint for career development (ABCD). In Ireland, an integrated set of development projects, managed by the National Guidance Forum, produced the framework of competences for guidance practitioners listed above and a national lifelong guidance framework (National Guidance Forum, 2007) detailing the career competences needed from early childhood to adulthood. There was also a consultative review of the perceptions of the general public on guidance services, and quality in guidance, a quality-assurance framework for guidance. (website addresses for these client competence standards are included in Annex 3.)

These attempts to frame the competence needed by the individual student and citizen to manage their own career development have an important contribution to make to the process of defining the competences needed by career guidance professionals. In relation to the parallel professional area of teaching, Roelofs and Sanders (2007) propose that ‘teacher competence is reflected in the consequences of teachers’ actions, the most important being

students' learning activities' (p. 127). A clear conceptualisation of the intended outcomes for clients can serve as a benchmark against which to judge many of the dilemmas that arise in defining practitioner tasks and competences. Identifying the intended consequence of professional activity can provide useful insights into the form and the standard required for that activity. Using such a benchmark has been helpful at this initial stage of developing the career guidance competence framework and is likely to be equally of value to those who set out to develop further actions based on it.

5.2.4. The structure of the competence framework

Existing frameworks frequently, but not always, include 'core' or compulsory elements as well as specialised or optional ones. The distinction is rarely explained. Sometimes these compulsory elements appear to reflect 'core' activities which it is assumed that all practitioners must perform in any work setting; at other times they seem to reflect a basic requirement that might underpin advancement to other levels of competence. Given the diversity of settings and delivery modes that apply for career guidance practitioners across Europe, it does not seem plausible to assume that any particular activity is an essential component of the range of tasks which might be undertaken by any specific individual. More credible is the idea that some competences are 'transversal', in that they encompass an ability or understanding that cuts across all the specific activities through which clients might be supported in developing and learning to manage their careers.

Further consideration of the notion leads to the proposition that transversal competences, which should appear everywhere in general, appear nowhere in isolation. As an example, ethical behaviour is a widely accepted 'good', but career guidance practitioners are not 'ethical' in isolation and in inactivity; they should display ethical performance in every professional task they undertake, whether this be talking with an individual client, leading a group session, or writing information materials for use within their service. This proposition led to the identification of a number of such transversal competences which are termed foundation competences, to reflect their relationship with other competences and with professional practice. All are characterised by the fact that they are not work tasks in themselves, but underpin and cross-cut all work tasks.

Turning attention to those elements of career guidance practice that can be seen as distinct activities, the competence framework uses a distinction made by the EAS project (Reid, 2007) and by Vuorinen et al. (2006). This distinction initially identifies those tasks that are prominent or visible to users of career guidance services, in that they normally occur as activities which directly involve one, or a group of, clients. Six such competences are identified and are termed client-interaction competences. While these activities are prominent to users when they occur, they are not necessarily required universally of career guidance practitioners, though it is likely that all practitioners would undertake some of them.

Finally, the competence framework contains a number of subsidiary activities frequently undertaken by career guidance practitioners to support and strengthen the resources and contexts for their work with clients, depending on the exact range of tasks allocated to their work role. These are termed supporting competences.

The distinction between ‘front office’ services (visible to clients) and ‘back office’ services (strategic design, and the development of policy and the delivery organisation) is developed by Vuorinen et al. (2006), specifically in relation to higher education careers service, but with potentially much wider application. Their emphasis is on the need for different services at different stages for any individual client, and differentiated services according to individual need for clients at ostensibly the same time in their career development. Interwoven with the underlying competence to deliver high quality services to clients is the capability to judge which specific services and methodologies are appropriate at any point to meet the diversity of client needs and how to promote this wider paradigm of guidance.

Section 6 of this report contains an overview and a detailed explanation of the competence framework that has been introduced here. It is important to see both the client-interaction competences and the supporting competences as areas of action which can be viewed holistically as having a distinct and valuable function; performance of each should always be pervaded by the foundation competences.

5.3. Understanding the competence framework

5.3.1. Words and language

Language, translation and interpretation become important issues when preparing a single tool for use in the many languages and cultures of the Member States of the EU. This is especially the case with career guidance, where many words used as technical terms, such as ‘guidance’, also have a range of everyday meanings, in English and in translation to other languages.

Interpretation raises further issues. A word which has been accurately translated, without difficulty, to another language may be interpreted, or its intended meaning understood, in a different way in that culture from the originating culture. Nuances in interpretation are widespread and reflect different European cultures. One example arises where labour markets have very different traditions. This project has noted frequent use of the terms ‘entrepreneurial’ and ‘entrepreneurship’, particularly in countries which previously had command economies, in ways which appear to make it more or less synonymous with an interest in engaging in private-sector business. By contrast, its current usage in English would still reflect the sense in the French original of some element of personal risk, in the hope of financial reward, such as in self-employment and business start-up.

Problems may arise not just between languages but within them. Young people may adopt differences of nuance for specific words from the meanings generally understood by the older population of their country; ‘young’ may be better interpreted in this context in relation to social attitudes rather than chronological age, a further example of the point made here. Frequently such shifts in the meaning of words reflect underlying value sets. Each translation and interpretation of the competence framework needs to find an appropriate balance between remaining consistent with the intended meaning of each statement of competence, while also adapting the framework to national and sectoral conditions.

5.3.2. Culture, context and personal values

The design and delivery of career guidance services is not value-free. Both the user of services and the career guidance practitioner bring their own contextual and cultural background and a set of personal values. The services to be provided by the practitioner and accessed by the user are normally a product of national or organisational policy. As an example, the Lisbon strategy's integrated guidelines for growth and jobs (European Commission, 2005b) and the national employment strategies of most Member States, promote maximum rates of gainful employment (full employment) as a central policy goal; but not every citizen will wish to comply with this policy goal. In this and other respects, some career guidance practitioners may have reservations about the ways in which policy goals are applied to their work. Many social, cultural, economic and personal circumstances and attitudes come into play in the process of helping people to manage the educational, training and occupational choices which make up their career, whether in paid work, voluntary roles or outside of the formal economy. Work may be sought for intrinsic enjoyment and reward, or for extrinsic reward (notably financial), or may not be desired at all.

This competence framework can only indicate the importance of the personal philosophies and world-views of both the career guidance practitioner and the user of their services. Each career guidance practitioner needs to develop high levels of personal reflectiveness; this is indicated in the foundation competence on clients' diverse needs. The brevity of description of the competence framework does not allow extended exploration of these issues, but they are extremely important in applying the framework to particular situations of career guidance work.

5.4. Understanding specific elements within the competence framework

This section contains comment relating specifically to two of the client-interaction competences: assessment and to client access to information.

5.4.1. Client-interaction element: conduct and enable assessment

The term assessment covers a wide range of actions, from the most general assessment through first impressions gained on meeting a stranger, to the detailed and formalised assessments of mental and/or physical capabilities that might be carried out by psychologists or medical staff. The definition of career guidance which guides this project includes 'help(ing) people to reflect on their ambitions, interests, qualifications and abilities', which implies self-assessment through both informal and formalised methods. Career guidance makes use of many methods of assessment, in response to different needs. Their range is indicated within this element of the competence framework, which is intended to be inclusive of all such activities, but not to imply that all, or any, should apply with any specific client. In this respect, this element is different in quality from all the other elements, where it is assumed that all 'main tasks' (left-hand column) will apply, although in ways that are guided by the 'contexts and conditions' (right-hand column) of each career guidance practitioner's work situation.

Underlying this element of the framework is a belief that clients should be fully engaged with the purpose, process and interpretation of assessment, and that any form of assessment is of limited use if it does not contribute to increased self-understanding by the client. Fostering such self-understanding is a key outcome of the competence of the career guidance practitioner in developing client personal career management skills.

Assessment and self-assessment play a role in the accreditation of prior experience and learning (APEL). The APEL process can be seen as having two broad stages: first, the recognition by the individual that learning and skill exists; and second, the formal validation of such learning and skill against an accreditation framework, or to provide exemption from normal qualification requirements. The first stage of this process – identifying prior non-formal learning and existing skills – falls within the remit of career guidance. It is also often closely linked with a process of identifying a preferred future option, and may require support to the individual in boosting confidence and in identifying the necessary steps towards achieving validation of learning and experience.

5.4.2. Client-interaction element: enable access to information

The career guidance practitioner needs to be a competent user of a wide range of information materials in a variety of formats. Central to this element is the practitioner's effort to develop the ability of the client to identify, access and interpret relevant and appropriate information for their needs.

Interpretation of this element, as with the assessment element previously discussed, can be more sharply focused if there is a clear understanding of the career management competence to be developed by the individual student and citizen (see subsection on client competences in Section 5.2. above).

5.5. Are all competences 'learnable'?

Sultana (forthcoming) explores the question of whether all competences can be taught or learnt, or whether some are attributes of the individual which become visible in performance of tasks. This raises fundamental questions about the notions that underpin both staff selection, recruitment and development, and also service delivery.

If some competences are, in essence, personality traits, are these amenable to change and development? This question needs to be applied to the organisation's staffing policy and will also form a part of the philosophy that underpins its approach to work with clients. Dependent on the response to this question, an employing organisation (or a related training institution) may wish to consider whether there are certain skills, values and attitudes that it needs to identify in people at the point of recruitment to employment or professional training. The study of existing training routes in the earlier part of this report found instances of:

- entry to training where considerable attention is paid to existing values and attitudes, without which entry was not permitted, so implying a belief that such attributes are not 'learnable';
- contrasting instances where recruitment was through publicity and prior level of qualification, with limited regard to individual characteristics, implying that anyone with

adequate academic capability would be trained in the necessary personal values, skills and attitudes.

5.6. Responses to the consultation process

The competence framework was circulated for comment by respondents in 30 countries, along with a response questionnaire (see Annex 4). The overall structure of the competence framework received highly favourable comment, and was viewed as taking an approach that was easy to understand. One respondent (Poland) commented that it is 'clear and simple, and might also be used by decision-makers at regional and national level … to allow them to understand the specific work of career guidance practitioners'.

Some respondents commented on the totality of the competences as being 'too much'; however, these respondents also generally confirmed that all the competences were applicable or desirable in their country. Some emphasised the extensive supervision and support that guidance practitioners would need. This comment arose particularly in countries such as Bulgaria (GCDF trainer), Romania and Slovakia, where training and workplace infrastructure are currently more limited. Other responses reflected the current development of career guidance practice in their country: for example, an emphasis on assessment and placement in the Czech Republic, where career development activities such as 'exploring new perspectives, forming strategies and plans' were viewed as 'not required', although desirable.

The consultation process identified a small number of areas where the language used had not been easily interpreted: such issues were addressed during the revision. Responses relating to use of the competence framework are covered in detail in Section 7.

6. The competence framework

6.1. Overview of the competence framework

6.1.1. Purpose

This competence framework for career guidance practitioners is intended to offer a generic description which incorporates all the activities needed to deliver career guidance as defined in the OECD review of career guidance and public policy (OECD, 2004). The purpose of the competence framework is to provide a working tool to support guidance practitioners and policy-makers in developing national and sectoral frameworks, quality-assurance tools and professional standards. It provides the starting point for development and experimentation in Member States, and can be enhanced through cooperative projects to test its validity further and to design methods for its use. More detailed commentary on potential uses of the competence framework follows in Section 7.

6.1.2. Conceptual background and potential uses

The framework comprises three interlinked sets of competence statements. The concepts behind these, including discussion of how they draw on the career guidance practitioner's knowledge, skills and personal values, are discussed at some length in Section 5. Potential uses for the competence framework are discussed in Section 7.

6.1.3. Language, interpretation and definitions

Both translation and interpretation issues are covered in detail in Section 5.3. The working definitions of competence and of career guidance are reproduced, for ease of reference, in this section immediately before the framework.

6.1.4. Contexts and conditions

There is a move towards convergence in policies relating to lifelong learning and lifelong guidance across the EU, but conditions for the delivery of career guidance services vary considerably between Member States, reflecting their cultural and economic traditions and heritage. At any point in time, countries also differ in economic circumstances and labour market conditions, and for each country these circumstances change over time. Such variations have an important impact on the ways in which career guidance is delivered.

Each element of the competence framework gives indications of the 'contexts and conditions' that users of the framework should define for their own situation. Contextual issues will apply at national and regional level, reflecting available national resources and current labour market conditions, and also at sectoral level. 'Sectors', for career guidance services, most frequently relate to the organisation delivering the service, such as schools, VET institutions, the public employment service, higher education, adult education, community projects, or employing organisations. Each will have its policies and practices, and necessary resources will differ, reflecting the needs of users of the career guidance

service. However, ‘sector’ can be defined in any way that reflects a specific set of influences for career guidance practitioners and their clients.

6.2. The structure of the competence framework

The competence framework for career guidance practitioners comprises three sections: foundation competences, client-interaction competences, and supporting competences.

6.2.1. Foundation competences

The first section of the competence framework describes the abilities, skills and knowledge that should pervade all professional activity by career guidance practitioners. These statements do not reflect stand-alone activities, but are the essential foundation of personal skills, values and ethical approaches which should be exhibited in all activities undertaken with or for users of career guidance services. Foundation competences are most closely related to subsections (c) and (d) of the definition of competence which has been used in developing this framework, and is included below.

6.2.2. Client-interaction competences

Client-interaction competences cover those actions that are prominent and visible to users of services. In particular, they cover activities where clients themselves are likely to be directly involved, through conversation or participation in groups, via communication technologies, or in supported access to other services and facilities. Client activities do not always occur in face-to-face situations, and the introduction to this section encourages attention to the differences that arise when services are provided at a distance through various media.

6.2.3. Supporting competences

Supporting competences describe a range of additional activities which are needed to support career guidance practitioners in their work with service users. They relate to the development of the service offered, to the career guidance practitioner’s management of his/her own role, and to the way that he/she reaches out within geographical and professional communities.

6.3. Definitions of competence and of career guidance

The following definitions, introduced earlier in this report (Section 5.1.), are reproduced here as an important aspect of the context for understanding and using the competence framework.

6.3.1. Definition of competence

This study has adopted the following four-part definition of competence:

(a) cognitive competence, involving the use of theory and concepts, as well as informal tacit knowledge gained experientially;
(b) functional competence (skills or know-how), involving those things that a person should be able to do when they are functioning in a given area of work, learning or social activity;

(c) personal competence, involving knowing how to conduct oneself in a specific situation;
(d) ethical competence, involving the possession of certain personal and professional values.

6.3.2. Definition of career guidance

This study has adopted the working definition of career guidance used by the OECD review of career guidance and public policy:

'Career guidance refers to services intended to assist people, of any age and at any point throughout their lives to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. Career guidance helps people to reflect on their ambitions, interests, qualifications and abilities. It helps them to understand the labour market and education systems, and to relate this to what they know about themselves. Comprehensive career guidance tries to teach people to plan and make decisions about work and learning. Career guidance makes information about the labour market and about educational opportunities more accessible by organising it, systematising it, and making it available when and where people need it.' (OECD, 2004, p. 19).

Figure 2. **The competence framework**

PRACTITIONER SKILLS AND VALUES	1	FOUNDATION COMPETENCES
	1.1	Ethical practice
	1.2	Recognise and respond to clients' diverse needs
	1.3	Integrate theory and research into practice
	1.4	Develop one's own capabilities and understand any limitations
	1.5	Communication and facilitation skills
	1.6	Information and computer technologies
WORKING WITH CLIENTS	2	CLIENT-INTERACTION COMPETENCES
	2.1	Undertake career development activities
	2.2	Enable access to information
	2.3	Conduct and enable assessment
	2.4	Develop and deliver career learning programmes
	2.5	Make referrals and provide advocacy
	2.6	Facilitate entry into learning and work
SYSTEMS AND NETWORKS	3	SUPPORTING COMPETENCES
	3.1	Manage opportunity information services
	3.2	Operate within networks and build partnerships
	3.3	Manage own caseload and maintain user records
	3.4	Design strategies for career development
	3.5	Engage with stakeholders
	3.6	Engage in research and evaluation
	3.7	Update own skills and knowledge

6.4. Foundation competences

The foundation competences listed below relate to the personal skills, values and ethical approach of the person performing work tasks, but these statements do not reflect stand-alone work tasks. All foundation competences should be demonstrated, in a manner suited to the local context and conditions, in all the activities covered by the client-interaction and supporting competences within this competence framework.

The foundation competences are particularly important in relation to the third and fourth aspects of the overall definition of competence: personal competence (knowing how to conduct oneself in a specific situation) and ethical competence (the possession of certain personal and professional values).

6.4.1. Contexts and conditions

Key issues relating to ethical practice are included under this heading. In addition, ethical practice needs to reflect the situation in which the career guidance practitioner works. Different issues arise when clients are mandated to attend (for example, as a condition of receiving welfare benefits), or when a third party has a controlling interest (for example, through funding). The underpinning issues will vary, but should include:

- career guidance practitioners being aware of constraints that apply to their work, and considering these in relation to their own personal values;
- ensuring that conditions and constraints, where they apply, are transparent to their clients.

All clients have diverse needs, some of which may result in disadvantage or discrimination. Some needs are apparent to others, and may be the subject of legislation and codes of practice. Other needs may be hidden, and may include complex issues such as self-stereotyping, or ambivalence between the culture of ethnic heritage and the culture of a country of current residence. Conversely, some clients may have exceptional capabilities and talents. The requirement for the career guidance practitioner is to extend their knowledge and understanding to the fullest reasonable extent in their work situation and to strive constantly for the highest degree of reflection on their own practice.

Figure 3. **Competence area 1: foundation competences**

1.1 Ethical practice
This involves knowledge of codes of practice and ethical guidelines, thinking how to apply standards in day-to-day behaviours, and awareness of legislation.
1.2 Recognise and respond to clients' diverse needs
This involves gaining knowledge and becoming aware of your own attitudes to cultural differences, discrimination and stereotyping. Knowledge of equal-opportunities legislation and codes of practice is important. Respect for the differing values and world views of others is included.

1.3 Integrate theory and research into practice
This involves taking positive action to develop your knowledge of lifelong career development processes, career guidance theory and practice, and other theoretical fields relevant to your work role. This includes access to recent research and consideration of applying it in practice.
1.4 Develop one's own capabilities and understand any limitations
This requires a reflective approach to consideration of own capacity and limitations, understanding professional boundaries and appropriate referral, and making use of management and peer support.
1.5 Communication and facilitation skills
Communication requires a range of skills, adjusted and customised to different work settings: listening and attention skills; questioning, probing, supporting and challenging; summarising and ensuring two-way understanding; group and public presentations; writing; and interpersonal skills.
1.6 Information and communication technologies
This involves competent use of various media: telephone and video communication; e-mail and messaging; access to Internet for resources; and use of the Internet for interactions.

6.5. Client-interaction competences

The six client-interaction competences describe activities which take place directly with users of career guidance services. In each case, the competence description relates to the activity, independent of the delivery mode, which may be either with individuals or with groups, and either face-to-face or through communication at a distance (for example, using telephone, Internet or e-mail facilities).

Different delivery modes require very different ways of applying competences:

- providing services to small or large groups requires different application of skills from working with an individual;
- providing information in an e-mail requires different use of language and communication skills from working face-to-face;
- holding a discussion by telephone requires greater sensitivity to tone of voice in the absence of visual cues.

ICT skills are separately described in other settings, particularly under the aegis of education and training bodies for such skills, in most Member States. When using this competence framework, the consideration is how ICT skills may be applied to, and integrated with, career guidance skills. Such consideration needs to take place at national and sectoral level (noting the earlier comments in Section 6.1. on how sectors may be defined), as

availability of ICT equipment and access to suitable online resources varies between Member States and sectors, influencing the competence required of career guidance practitioners. Where the delivery of career guidance services through ICT media has been extensively studied, as in Finland, methods of integration are found to be crucial. It is becoming increasingly important, with the widespread availability of ICT systems in many formats, that these are seen as both a resource and a communication method. Consequently they should be integrated from the earliest stages of training for career guidance practitioners and at all stages of design, delivery and evaluation (including evaluation methods) in developing new services. The focus is not only on the use of ICT directly with clients, but also with employers, parents, educational institutions and other stakeholders.

Use of ICT also introduces a variable relating to recognising clients' diverse needs (see Section 6.4. on foundation competences). Clients will vary considerably with regard to their ability to use ICT, their willingness to do so for career guidance purposes, and the specific methods that suit their preferences. Career guidance has an educative role, which may include helping people to find ways to develop their ability to use ICT facilities for career guidance purposes, but it should not be coercive.

6.5.1. Contexts and conditions

Each main competence statement below – for example, 'Undertake career development activities' – is divided into subsections (left-hand column) which are either stages or optional activities related to the main statement. Adjacent to these (right-hand column) are a number of items that are intended to provide examples and to stimulate thought about what particular 'contexts and conditions' should apply for this competence in the country or the sector in which it is planned to use the framework. These are emphatically not requirements; however, in any use of the framework, those involved will need to create their own local or sectoral items for this column.

The competence statement 'Conduct and enable assessment' will have different applications in different sectors (see discussion in Section 5.4.). Some forms of psychological assessment are subject to professional regulation; other forms, notably supported self-assessment, are freely available. Forms of assessment in use will reflect the philosophy of career guidance adopted in each career guidance service, and often the traditions within each Member State.

Figure 4. **Competence area 2: client-interaction competences**

2.1 Undertake career development activities Working with individuals or groups, face-to-face, by telephone or online	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Build the relationship with users	Contracting; agreeing boundaries Screening to match user needs and services available Establishing the process and timescales Clarifying expectations and resources
Enable users' self-understanding	Skills and aptitudes Review of interests Life history; achievements and setbacks Challenging hopes and fears Health and personal circumstances
Build users' capability for career management	Coaching techniques Performance enhancement Building employability Skill development Motivation Capability to access people and resources Mentoring and role models
Explore new perspectives	Identifying opportunities and generating ideas Taster and trial experiences Focusing on change Challenging expectations Sampling and seeking feedback Researching information and procedures
Form strategies and plans	Action planning Developing strategies and goal-setting Identifying and overcoming barriers Identifying sources of further help Client's existing contacts and networks

2.2 Enable access to information Working with individuals or groups, face-to-face, by telephone or online	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Identify information sources	Relevant sources and people: • books and publications • websites and Internet sources • employers and experts • colleagues, peers and mentors Including: education, training, labour market information and trends, social issues, benefits and entitlements, leisure and voluntary Local, regional, national, European and global; taking account of mobility User's own resources and contacts
Assess user's information-handling skills	Literacy, computer and communication skills Knowledge and use of classification systems
Facilitate access to information	Selecting and recommending sources Offering support for searches Demonstrating how to use sources Developing information-handling skills
Interpret information	Assessing the quality of information Overcoming stereotypes
Develop client's autonomous interpretation of information	Support self-assessment of information needs Develop client's capability to assess personal motivation and values against opportunity information

2.3 Conduct and enable assessment Working with individuals or groups, face-to-face, by telephone or online	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Clarify and agree the need for assessment	Specific assessment needs, e.g. interests, language ability, skills assessments Assessment methods
Support the use of self-assessment activities	Lifelines, checklists and inventories
Administer formal assessment	Psychological tests: • learning disabilities; aptitude and ability tests • group or individual; standardised; self-report Norms, profiles and reports Reliability and validity of assessment Ensure understanding of assessment results Implications and relevance to user's plans and strategies

Assess informally and explore options	Review past learning and experience Recognise skill, knowledge and other achievements Identify ways of building on existing competence, including through access to accreditation of prior experience and learning (APEL)

2.4 Develop and deliver career learning programmes Working with individuals or groups, face-to-face, by telephone or online	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Design programmes to meet identified needs	Consider involvement of users in design Tailor methods and materials to users' characteristics and situations Programme content
Deliver sessions and activities	Learning and teaching styles Access to equipment and resources Participation and communication styles
Review and evaluate career learning programmes	Monitor progress and make changes Obtain, analyse and use feedback

2.5 Make referrals and provide advocacy Working with individuals or groups, face-to-face, by telephone or online	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Agree the need to involve others	Identify the need for referral Recognise boundaries of own expertise Possible mentors and role models
Ensure willingness and ability to take up referral	Confidence and motivation Emotional acceptance of need (e.g. treatment for addiction) Communication skills Information about oneself Information about the external contact
Facilitate contact with others	Ensure up-to-date details Generate new referral contacts when needed Make introductions
Provide or support advocacy	Represent users and negotiate on their behalf Support preparation for self-advocacy

2.6 Facilitate entry into learning and work Working with individuals or groups, face-to-face, by telephone or online	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Agree placement options	Range of opportunities: local, regional, national, European and global: • employment • training • voluntary and community work • work experience and shadowing; tasters and secondments Decision strategies Networks Speculative applications Informal and formal approaches
Advise on the preparation of personal information for applications	Formats: CVs and résumés; application forms; letters Paper and electronic Tailoring styles to specific settings
Support the application process	Interview technique Awareness of selection procedures Coaching and role-playing Appropriate behaviour in work and learning settings
Promote learning from experiences	Debriefing and constructive feedback Follow-up support

6.6. Supporting competences

These seven competences describe the range of supporting actions needed to enable client interactions to be performed to a high standard. In some countries, an activity may be largely centralised (an example might be the preparation and dissemination of career information systems and materials). In some sectors or services, an activity might be allocated to one member of a team to perform it on behalf of the team. Other activities, such as 'Update own skills and knowledge', will always be individually required.

Again, each main competence statement in this section – for example, 'Manage opportunity information services' – is divided into subsections (left-hand column) which are either stages or optional activities related to the main statement. Adjacent to these (right-hand column) are a number of items which are intended to provide examples and to stimulate thought about what particular 'contexts and conditions' should apply for this competence in the country or the sector in which it is planned to use the competence framework. As in the previous section, these are emphatically not requirements; however, in any use of the framework, those involved will need to create their own local or sectoral items for this column.

The policies and practices of the organisation employing career guidance practitioners will impact on the interpretation of the supporting competences. For example:

(a) aspects of time management and the requirements for client records may be dictated by organisational policy;
(b) updating of skill and knowledge may be largely implemented through the organisation's staff development policy;
(c) information specialists may develop and manage the organisation's information services;
(d) some career guidance practitioners may have limited opportunity to 'engage in research and evaluation'; constraints may arise from organisational and time pressures which do not permit space for this.

Figure 5. **Competence area 3 – Supporting competences**

3.1 Manage opportunity information services	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Identify information needed for career development activities	Needs of both service providers and service users Local, national and international: • employment and labour market • entrepreneurship • education and training • voluntary and community work • social issues and care • travel • funding sources • benefits and entitlements Formats and resources
Obtain and prepare information materials	Free and priced publications and services Copyright Paper, Internet and display materials Preparing and writing information to meet local needs
Classify and store materials	Ease of access Appropriate classification systems Storage and access media
Review and update information	Criteria for currency and relevance

3.2 Operate within networks and build partnerships	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Identify range of networks relevant to work role	Professional and employment contacts Training and education contacts Support for social and personal issues Identify potential partners
Exchange information with network members	Level of detail Accuracy and currency of information Confidentiality

3.3 Manage own caseload and maintain user records	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Create and maintain user records	Formats and styles User's involvement in keeping records Use of records in referral Confidentiality Legal requirements
Use records to support progress	Existing user information Action plans and personal development plans Refer to internal and external records
Prioritise use of own time and resources	Time management Financial resources Legal requirements Organisational policies and procedures

3.4 Design and implement strategies for career development	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Understand the needs of the target population	Demographic information Social and economic characteristics and situation Methods of engaging with service users
Establish aims, objectives and delivery methods for career development activities	Formulating objectives Timescales Funding and resources
Agree roles and responsibilities in delivery	Own contribution On-site, or at external sites Roles of other professionals and practitioners Use of specialists Outreach
Provide training and development opportunities for people involved in delivery	Identifying training needs Coaching and mentoring
Provide and customise materials	Formats suited to users Accessibility of language and content Currency of information
Review, evaluate and modify	Feedback methods Analysis of feedback Make improvements
Support implementation of a quality-assurance strategy	Quality-assurance models Relevant quality standards

3.5 Engage with stakeholders	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Identify stakeholders	Government and policy bodies Funding sources Users' representative groups Employers Learning providers Educational institutions
Develop and maintain relationships with stakeholders	Communication and reports Areas of shared interest Evaluation and feedback from stakeholders

3.6 Engage in research and evaluation	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Develop knowledge of research methods	Research methodologies and methods Data-gathering techniques Analysis of qualitative and quantitative information Use of research literature Research ethics
Implement research or evaluation projects	Agreement of all parties Seek views of service users Involvement of stakeholders Funding
Interpret, present and use findings	Presentation methods Dissemination methods Integrating results into practice

3.7 Update own skills and knowledge	
Main tasks	*Contexts and conditions which you might think about*
Reflect on practice and plan development activities	Knowledge, skills and attitudes Current and changing work roles Current and changing economic, social and political environment Interact with colleagues and other professionals Self-evaluation
Participate in development activities	Workshops and conferences Formal accredited courses Peer learning Self-study and self-managed learning
Apply new knowledge to work role	Support of managers and colleagues

7. Using the competence framework

7.1. Customising the framework

This competence framework has been developed at European level. It therefore encapsulates the key tasks that need to be provided as part of a system of career guidance in each country. It does not dictate which organisations should provide career guidance services; the merits and disadvantages of different models have been examined elsewhere (Cedefop, Sultana, 2004; Sultana, 2003, 2006; OECD, 2004; Sultana and Watts, 2005). It is, however, unlikely that the career guidance needs of the population of any European country, as outlined in the resolution of the Council of the European Union (2004), could be met without attention to all 19 of the competence statements which make up this framework. Some competences will undoubtedly be required in all delivery organisations: the client-interaction competence 'Undertake career development activities' is one example. By contrast, the competence 'Facilitate entry into learning and work' may not be relevant in all settings.

The framework needs further customising in relation to the 'contexts and conditions which you might think about' (the right-hand column under each element). The entries here are indicative of the range of issues which might need consideration. Available resources, cultural and sectoral conditions, and applicable standards and codes, all need to be reflected here, as appropriate to the situation and type of proposed use.

7.2. The competence framework and qualification systems

The earlier part of this report shows a significant move towards the development of specialised training in career guidance at postgraduate and master's level, through both full-time and part-time courses. Training also exists in most countries at lower levels, both through institution-based full-time and part-time courses, and through in-service and workplace provision. In many countries, educators and trainers are active throughout all the cycles of higher education (EQF levels 6 to 8), and at lower levels for some in-service training. Section 3.1. includes comment on the need for the coverage of a specialised curriculum within training, as well as arguments for a sufficient academic level of training for specialist career guidance practitioners.

This competence framework has several possible uses in planning and developing training courses at all levels. It offers a framework that could provide common ground for dialogue between policy-makers (planning career guidance provision within their area of remit) and trainers (tasked with providing suitable learning opportunities for those who will deliver the planned services). McCarthy (2004) notes the lack of such dialogue, which can be facilitated through a shared framework of the tasks of career guidance, with scope to identify the contexts and conditions for competent practice in specific circumstances.

Taken further, and with the inclusion of other key players such as professional associations of career guidance practitioners, the competence framework can pave the way towards addressing policy issues raised in the handbook for policy-makers (OECD and

European Commission, 2004). This publication records the lack of 'graded and integrated learning pathways that enable guidance workers to progress from non-expert to expert status' (p. 45). It also notes that, while much training is inadequate to equip practitioners with the knowledge and skills needed for their job, conversely – in some countries – there is too much emphasis on lengthy training that 'develops skills to provide in-depth careers intervention and psychological counselling required by only a minority of users'. The competence framework can provide a common reference tool for training provision at all levels, including in-service and CPD training.

The framework is focused on coverage, but does not address level. As new courses are developed or existing courses reviewed, it is useful to have an external benchmark against which to assess course coverage. Respondents to the study of career guidance qualifications and training, reported in the early sections of this report, relate that they have used other competence frameworks, such as that developed by the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG), for this purpose. A common European competence framework can support this activity; it has a particular value when a common reference tool is helpful, for example, when such training developments are taking place within transnational projects with EU funding.

Level needs to be addressed in relation to the requirements of specific job roles and tasks, which are normally delivered in team settings, frequently as part of a wider network of provision. Non-expert and paraprofessional staff have a role to play in career guidance teams, but should be adequately trained for their tasks, within a framework that enables progression for those who seek it. The European qualifications framework, the Copenhagen process (VET) and the Bologna process (HE) create the frameworks and generic descriptors for each cycle of vocational training and higher education based on learning outcomes and competences. The development of national qualifications frameworks (by 2010) completes the structures which can support 'integrated learning pathways'. The value of both specialist career guidance practitioners and of dispersed networks was discussed in Section 1.5. It rests with each Member State to confirm the pattern of delivery that best suits national needs and circumstances, and to work towards an adequate structure for training the staff who will be the key resource in delivery.

7.3. Other potential uses for the competence framework

The framework can play an important role in shaping training provision, but has potential to be used for other purposes. The uses outlined here are organised according to the body or group which might initiate the use.

7.3.1. Organisations delivering career guidance services

Career guidance is delivered by many different organisations, including public authorities (national and regional), schools and other educational institutions, by some private organisations and by community and charitable groups. Each organisation will have its own strategic purposes, which in turn will influence the potential user-groups to whom it makes its services available. Some delivery organisations will have career guidance as their main function, while others will deliver career services as a small part of a wider remit. These

differences highlight the need for each organisation to consider how use of the competence framework might contribute to furtherance of their distinctive service delivery.

Such organisations will normally be employers or contractors of career guidance practitioners. The range of uses for the competence framework could include:

(a) using the framework to decide which of the elements within it their organisation should offer to their users; a corollary of this is exploring how to access for their users any services that they are not able to provide themselves;
(b) deciding and recording the conditions and standards of the service they will offer. This has implications both for the ways in which services are explained and publicised to potential users, and for the standards that are set for staff performance, with possible implications for recruitment and selection (see Section 5.5.);
(c) mapping individual staff roles to the various functions, so that there is clarity about which staff members perform which range of tasks;
(d) using standards set (as in activity (b) above) to underpin a number of staff development functions such as staff appraisals, identifying training needs, arranging continuing professional development, and encouraging peer-learning groups among staff;
(e) developing a framework for the accreditation of prior experience and learning (APEL) for their staff (see also the case study on Denmark in Section 4.3.);
(f) informing the evaluation of services, including their methods for seeking feedback from service users.

7.3.2. Professional associations of career guidance practitioners

Professional associations of career guidance practitioners exist in many countries; in others, new associations are being formed as career guidance becomes a recognised area of professional activity. In a number of countries with a long history of career guidance activities, there are several professional associations serving memberships in different sectors of career guidance delivery.

Professional associations might use the competence framework both in relation to their own members and as a way of cooperating with each other:

(a) forming and expressing publicly a view on the services that should be offered in their country or sector;
(b) establishing a professional view on the standards and conditions that should apply to professional practice;
(c) delivering or arranging access to relevant training for their members;
(d) creating an assessment framework to underpin a system of membership entitlement and/or registration to practise;
(e) aligning qualification requirements to facilitate movement of individual career guidance practitioners between sectors.

7.3.3. Career guidance practitioners

There is considerable emphasis within the framework on the need for career guidance practitioners to develop their own practice. The competence framework can provide:

(a) a tool for self-assessment;
(b) a basis for peer development activities with colleagues.

7.3.4. Policy-makers

The OECD review (2004) identified a number of different policy goals which countries were addressing through their provision of career guidance services. These ranged from broad support for lifelong learning policies and human resource development, to more specific goals such as helping people to find pathways though increasingly individualised and diversified education programmes. Some countries identified specific target groups, such as people with low levels of qualification and skills, while all countries made some provision to address the career guidance needs of unemployed people. Career guidance can be seen as a tool to reduce drop-out rates from learning programmes, and as a way to improve the interface and progression pathways between learning provision and the labour market. In line with European policy goals, some countries saw the potential for career guidance services to increase mobility: geographically between regions and Member States; through advancement and progression through hierarchies; or laterally, particularly when structural change in the labour market creates a need for the redeployment of skills from shrinking employment sectors to those with labour needs.

Policy-makers need to ensure that appropriate career guidance services are available to meet strategic goals, and that they have access to suitable resources and networks. In pursuing their strategic goals, policy-makers can use the competence framework:

(a) to plan and review the range of career guidance activities that are offered, and to ensure that there is suitable provision to meet specific strategic goals;
(b) in mapping which existing career guidance organisations offer which services, and encouraging networking between organisations to meet the needs of specific sectors of the population;
(c) to frame their evaluation plans for assessing the overall effectiveness of services;
(d) in planning the provision of training routes for career guidance practitioners;
(e) in discussions with educators, trainers and employers of career guidance practitioners, to agree shared goals for practitioner competence.

8. Moving forward

8.1. Attention to training

The review of career guidance and public policy carried out by OECD (2004) places before policy-makers a series of questions concerning the design and delivery of career guidance services for national populations at all stages from compulsory education, through working life, to retirement years. The OECD review emphasises that no single system will provide a blueprint appropriate for all countries, and argues for policy engagement with the design of national services to meet national needs and priorities. However, the review also concludes that within each country's system for the delivery of career guidance services there is a part to be played by specialist staffing:

'These arguments in favour of providing career guidance through separate, specialised occupations and through specialised career guidance services are reinforced by the need … for policy-makers to make career guidance services more transparent and visible as part of the process of better specifying supply and demand' (OECD, 2004, p. 146).

This report has addressed the need to identify qualifications and competences needed by specialist staff, by those working in supporting (paraprofessional) roles and by those undertaking career guidance tasks as part of another main professional role. In order to provide high-quality services, it is essential to create training and qualification systems which address the specific needs of each member of the career guidance workforce, and which support the Bologna and Lisbon strategies in creating qualification pathways that both promote career progression and facilitate lateral and geographical movement of staff. The value of networked and dispersed delivery systems alongside specialist services is recognised. Such systems place additional demands on the skills of specialist career guidance practitioners to support and resource them, and require diverse training opportunities to develop a diverse workforce.

The training, qualifications and competence of staff at all levels are essential to ensuring the quality of career guidance services. In a parallel professional field, the importance of training and qualifications for teachers has been recognised in the *Common European principles for teacher competence and qualifications* (European Commission, 2005a). A similar document for the career guidance profession would serve the same aim of giving an impetus for developing policy. It might indeed mirror the key competences for teachers, identified as: work with others; work with knowledge, technology and information; and work with, and in, society. The key principles for career guidance practice should be closely aligned to those in the *Resolution on strengthening policies, systems and practices in the field of guidance throughout life in Europe* (Council of the European Union, 2004). As with the document relating to the teaching profession, there should be clear recommendations to national and regional policy-makers to promote implementation.

This report has noted that, in some countries, training and qualifications are the only significant quality procedure currently in place; yet, in a number of instances, involvement with training, particularly in-service training and continuing professional development, may be

at the discretion of the individual worker rather than part of a systematic process to maintain the currency of skill and competence in the workforce. The OECD review (2004) recommends that policy-makers should '(w)ork … more closely with career guidance practitioners to shape the nature of initial and further education and training qualifications …' (p. 149). McCarthy (2004) stresses the need for increased dialogue between policy-makers and training institutions to ensure that training systems and the content of training courses are aligned with public-policy priorities.

A considerable proportion of training for career guidance staff, specialist or otherwise, is provided post-entry. Often it is delivered in a way that is specific to the sector through which it is provided, thus reducing mobility between sectors, and failing to support the development of a distinctive professional identity for career guidance, an important element in making career guidance services more visible to potential users. Pre-entry training for career guidance is a desirable option, particularly where it is designed in a way that provides common-core elements alongside specialised elements attuned to particular employment sectors (for example, education, public employment service, private sector). Common-core elements of such training can be expected to increase the levels of understanding and cooperation between different delivery sectors, and also to increase the possibilities for individual staff to develop their own career through movement between sectors.

The value of common frameworks for all initial, induction and in-service training is covered in Section 8.4. below.

8.2. Sufficiency

A key item raised in this report is the question of seeking, both nationally and within a European context, a consensus on what may be viewed as a sufficient level of training and competence for those operating as specialist career guidance practitioners. This raises questions of both the level and the degree of specialisation needed, in relation to the role of career guidance practitioner as defined in different countries. In many instances, specialisation as a career guidance practitioner will include a role in coordinating networked and dispersed delivery, as well as in direct work with and for clients.

Currently, those involved in delivering career guidance services as part of another professional role, as a paraprofessional, or as a contributor to non-formal delivery networks, have a wide range of types and levels of training, and sometimes none at all. Few countries have reported systems for quality assurance of such delivery.

8.3. Evidence for what works

There is need to seek evidence on what levels and forms of training are effective in developing career guidance practice which is able to deliver the client outcomes needed to achieve desired policy outcomes in each country and to meet EU goals. The OECD review (2004) provides a clear guideline:

'Policies should assume that all people need career decision-making skills and career self-management skills, and that everybody needs access to high quality, impartial career

information. Accordingly, the first priorities for policy-makers should be systems that develop skills and systems that provide information. Policies should not be based on the assumption that everybody needs intensive personal advice and guidance, but should seek to match levels of personal help, from brief to intensive, to personal needs and circumstances' (p. 139).

Those countries that have considered the career management competences required by individual citizens have taken an important step in defining the outcomes of career guidance in terms of the individual person; this adds a significant extra dimension alongside the measurement of service success in terms of client destinations (entry to employment, training, etc.). Such statements of client competences provide an important building block for a system for gathering evidence that matches input in terms of activities, resources, and staff training and competence, to the achievement of outputs in terms of clients' competence in managing their own career processes.

Increased understanding of the career management skills needed by individual citizens, at whatever age or stage, permits a move towards a purposeful design of diverse types of service and methods of delivery to meet varied individual needs. Such diverse delivery systems require diverse staff structures. Matching the training needed to the staff role to be delivered should be based on evidence from studies of the effectiveness of service personnel, taking into account their initial and continuing training and the competence they have demonstrated. Many countries have several different forms of training, and there is considerable diversity of training across the whole range of EU Member States. This could provide the basis for both national and European studies measuring and comparing the effectiveness of career guidance delivery against the staff training inputs received.

Over time, evidence can be amassed on the most effective training methods for achieving the level and form of competence required for various roles within the diverse staffing structure. This report has considered a number of training traditions and patterns (Section 2.2.) and the use of various teaching methods, including distance and e-learning, practicum, and exposure to labour market and occupational knowledge (Section 3); each of these may have a different value for different staff roles and in different training contexts.

8.4. The competence framework and national qualifications

Diverse training delivery needs to be related to common-core elements, which will allow career guidance practitioners to create individual but integrated learning pathways to support their own career progression. There is considerable scope in almost every country to develop frameworks encompassing the learning pathways available for career guidance tasks at all levels. Such frameworks need to meet the principles of the Bologna and Copenhagen strategies in identifying progression routes for staff and trainees, both vertically and laterally, and should be in accord with the country's own national qualifications framework; under the Bologna process, this should be in place by 2010. As an initial step, the learning outcomes of existing training provision can be mapped against an agreed competence framework, showing which areas of competence are addressed in which modules of training. Preferably, such mapping should be acknowledged at a national level, using the proposed European competence framework contained within this report. The

framework itself should be developed nationally, including customising the contexts and conditions of both national and sectoral circumstances.

McCarthy (2004) documents impediments to the mobility of career guidance practitioners, both between the labour market and education sectors, and from non-professional to professional status. Action as suggested here will clarify for each country the specific nature of those impediments and permit coherent planning to improve occupational mobility.

8.5. National coordination

Other uses of the competence framework are outlined in Section 7, along with the possible roles that could be played by different groups such as practitioners, professional associations, policy-makers and employers of career guidance practitioners. While each has a part to play, a common need in many countries is for improved coordination; few examples of good practice have been identified. Some that have the possibility to offer examples to other countries are explored in the case study section (Section 4): Denmark, which has coordinated training and delivery systems across all sectors except the public employment service; Latvia, where a new master's level training programme was designed through cross-sectoral cooperation in support of a number of other service delivery initiatives; and Scotland, where the devolved government, universities and the main employer worked together to design a new training programme to meet identified service needs.

Consensus between government ministries, understanding and developing individual career-management skills in a lifelong perspective, as advocated by the OECD review (2004), will clarify the services and tasks required of career guidance practitioners. This, in turn, will allow national customisation of the European competence framework to underpin staff development from recruitment and selection, through initial, induction and in-service training, and as a benchmark for evaluation and quality assurance.

8.6. Support at European level

The training and competence of career guidance practitioners are essential to developing the quality and coordination of career guidance services. As such, they should receive increasing attention at the European policy level to ensure that the career guidance systems across Europe will play their necessary part in achieving the goals of the Lisbon strategy. In more concrete terms, this policy interest may be demonstrated through funding large-scale long-term development projects and comparative evaluation studies, and the dissemination of their findings, both through publications and through peer learning events. This is clearly a domain where Cedefop can continue taking politically and strategically innovative and far-reaching guidance initiatives in the future, too.

Within its work programme, ELGPN could consider drafting common European principles for career guidance practitioner competences and qualifications (see Section 8.1.) in cooperation with key actors, such as Cedefop. Additionally, ELGPN, through its cooperation with national guidance forums could initiate work on a common framework for professional qualifications and training. ELGPN could also explore common evaluation methods and work towards assembling, at European level, evidence that contributes to an understanding of

what levels and forms of training are most effective and cost-effective for various guidance tasks. Finally, developing quality assurance mechanisms for lifelong guidance provision (including competences and qualifications of career guidance practitioners) is already on the ELGPN work programme 2009-10.

List of acronyms and abbreviations

ABCD	Australian blueprint for career development
AMS	*Arbeitsmarktservice* (Austria's public employment service)
APEL	Accreditation of prior experience and learning
BA	*Bundesagentur für Arbeit* (Germany's public employment service)
Cedefop	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CIO	*Centres d'information et d'orientation* (France)
CIRAE	Centre for Resources and Educational Assistance (Romania)
COP	*Conseiller d'orientation psychologue* (France)
CPD	Continuing professional development
CV	Curriculum vitae
DES	Department of Education and Science (Ireland)
DETE	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Ireland)
EAS	European accreditation scheme
ECGC	European career guidance certificate
ECTS	European credit transfer and accumulation system
ELGPN	European lifelong guidance policy network
EQF	European qualifications framework
ESF	European Social Fund
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
FÁS	*Foras Áiseanna Saothair* (Ireland's public employment service)
FOREM	Community and Regional Agency for Employment and Vocational Training (Belgium: French-speaking community)
FUE	Common Council for Associations for Educational and Vocational Guidance (Denmark)
GCDF	Global career development facilitator
HE	Higher education
HR	Human resources
HRD	Human resource development
IAEVG	International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance
ICCi	Institute of Career Certification International
ICT	Information and communication technologies
KL	*Kommunernes Landsforening* (Association of Danish Municipalities)

LMI	Labour market information
NCGE	National Centre for Guidance in Education (Ireland)
NICEC	National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (UK)
NUI	National University of Ireland
NVQ	National vocational qualification (UK)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PDP	Personal development planning
PES	Public employment service
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency (UK)
QCG	Qualification in career guidance (UK)
SMEs	Small- and medium-sized enterprises
TLMTCS	Territorial labour market training and counselling services (Lithuania)
USAID	United States aid for international development
UU	*Ungdommens Uddannelsesvejledning* (Denmark's youth guidance centres)
VDAB	*De Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding* (Flemish Public Employment and Vocational Training Service) (Belgium: Flanders)
VET	Vocational education and training
VIAA	*Valsts Izglītības Attīstības Aģentūra* (State Education Employment Agency) (Latvia)

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Annex 1: The research

The study on existing training and qualification routes commenced with a review of documentary records for each country, largely drawing on a range of reports commissioned in recent years by Cedefop, OECD, the World Bank and ETF. Particular use was made of the questionnaire responses and country notes, where they existed, for these earlier studies, and those of the current European accreditation system (EAS) project, which are unpublished but were made available to the project team. Once an overall picture of career guidance delivery and training methods in each country had been gained, one or several contacts in each country were approached to check on the currency of information and to gain a greater level of detail on specific training routes. Initial contacts often suggested further people to contact; a list of all the people who contributed to the research is included in Annex 2.

The competence framework was drafted following initial work to clarify the definition of competence. Existing competence frameworks were identified, both within the EU and from further afield. Particular use was made of an aggregate list of competences developed by the EAS project for their Work package 1 ([11]) report. The first draft of the competence framework was checked against each existing competence framework to make sure that no significant items had been overlooked. The final draft competence framework was then circulated, with a response questionnaire, to all the country contacts established in connection with the other strand of the project. Responses to this consultation were analysed, and the final version of the competence framework was prepared for inclusion in this report.

The research covers 30 countries: the 27 Member States of the European Union, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

([11]) Available from Internet: http://www.corep.it/eas/output/wp1/report_WP1_Hazel_Reid_sept_2008.pdf [cited 2.12.2008].

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Annex 3: Websites for competence frameworks and client-competence frameworks

Competence frameworks

International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG)
http://www.iaevg.org

European accreditation scheme (EAS)
http://www.corep.it/eas/home.htm

Institute of Career Certification International (ICCi)
http://www.careercertification.org/

MEVOC - the quality manual for educational and vocational counselling
http://www.ecgc.at/

Canadian standards and guidelines for career development practitioners
http://www.career-dev-guidelines.org/career_dev/

Professional standards for Australian career development practitioners
http://www.cica.org.au/index.pl?page=7

Ireland - framework of competences for guidance practitioners
http://www.nationalguidanceforum.ie/

United Kingdom national vocational qualifications (NVQs)
http://www.ento.co.uk/standards/advice_guidance/index.php

Client-competence frameworks

Australian blueprint for career development (ABCD)
http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/career_development/policy_issues_reviews/key_issues/australian_blueprint_for_career_dev/

Canada: the blueprint for life/work designs
http://www.blueprint4life.ca/

Ireland: National Guidance Forum
http://www.nationalguidanceforum.ie/ (choose ‘publications’, where the client competence framework is included within the main report *Guidance for Life*)

Annex 4: Competence framework for career guidance practitioners – questionnaire

Your name	Country
Please give a brief description of your work role (e.g. career guidance delivery, training) and your setting (e.g. school, public employment service, university)	
Are the competences described in this draft competence framework all applicable in your country? Yes / No Please add comment *Foundation competences* *Client-interaction competences* *Supporting competences*	
Have we omitted any competences which are important nationally or within sectors in your country? Yes / No Please add comment *Foundation competences* *Client-interaction competences* *Supporting competences*	
Do you have any comments on possible improvements to the structure and layout of the draft competence framework?	
Do you think it likely that your country will make use of a European competence framework for career guidance practitioners? If yes, please comment on possible uses. If no, please say why.	
We would value any further comments on the development and use of a European competence framework for career guidance practitioners.	
Thank you for your help. Your responses will be carefully considered in developing the final version of the competence framework.	

Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training)

Professionalising career guidance
Practitioner competences and qualification routes in Europe

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Professionalising career guidance

Practitioner competences and qualification routes in Europe

The competence of career guidance staff makes an essential contribution to the quality of career guidance services. This report confirms that current training provision for such staff is highly variable between countries and sectors in Europe, although there is clear movement towards more specialised training. Opportunities for staff mobility are limited, particularly between education and labour market sectors and from paraprofessional to professional roles. The review reports recent trends in training provision, key issues requiring attention and possible actions by policy makers, trainers and practitioners. It includes six detailed case studies of countries that have taken coordinated action to address national issues. The report addresses the concept of competence and defines the specific competences needed by career guidance practitioners. It proposes a competence framework relevant to their work, and explores the ways in which the competence framework may be used, including the creation of more flexible and coherent training pathways for individual staff.

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