

Key ideas from the ETF report related to career guidance

Chapter 2

2.3 The role of career guidance – *Innovative approaches needed*

- ✓ Career-guidance models and practices should consider the global challenges and support both public policies and individuals in addressing these.
- ✓ And previous research confirmed that career guidance can make significant contributions, not only to individuals but also to the achievement of public-policy goals in education, employment and social inclusion
- ✓ Career-development programmes and services should change the focus from supporting individuals in making appropriate career decisions to helping them develop decision-making, proactive and resiliency skills
- ✓ The role of career guidance ...has to adapt more rapidly and flexibly to the changing needs of citizens and the world of work.
- ✓ A 'green guidance' approach (Plant, 2014) is advocated in view of global warming and environmental challenges.
- ✓ New guidance concepts are needed to question the mainstream, individualistic career-development theories and practices.
- ✓ A rethinking of current practices and the introduction of innovative methods of career-guidance delivery, some already being developed and under implementation.
- ✓ The innovation may include: providing resources to support innovation and space for piloting new career-development programmes and services; adopting a multi-channel approach to the delivery of career-development programmes and services; ensuring training and support for career-development professionals to innovate and develop their practice.

Practitioners should be well-prepared for: implementing a more individualised service provision; introducing the sustainability dimension; developing clients' transversal skills for the future; and making more use of new technologies in career guidance.

Carrer guidance is most effective when...

A study of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (Hooley, 2014) on the existing evidence of lifelong guidance concluded that guidance is most effective when it meets the set of features below:

1. is lifelong and progressive;
2. connects meaningfully to the wider experience and lives of the individuals who participate in it;
3. recognises the diversity of individuals and provides services relevant to their needs;
4. combines a range of interventions (e.g. one-to-one and online support);
5. encourages the acquisition of career management skills;
6. is holistic and well-integrated into other support services;
7. involves employers and working people, and provide active experiences of workplaces;
8. is delivered by skilled, well-trained and motivated practitioners;
9. draws on high-quality career information;
10. is quality-assured and evaluated.

Career guidance and young people

A recent OECD study highlights that, with labour markets undergoing rapid and fundamental changes, decision-making becomes more important but also more difficult.

While the world of work has undergone major changes in the past 20 years, the career expectations of young people have changed little and become even more concentrated (OECD, 2020).

International survey data reveals that 30% of teenagers globally are interested in just 10 occupations (IAG, 2019), and many young people aspire to jobs that are at risk of automation.

The 'green guidance' approach

The 'green guidance' approach is concerned with sustainable development, environmental conscientiousness, and responsibility for the ecosystem. It deals with the choice of work and jobs that minimise environmental harm and enhance awareness of the importance of green careers. It also encourages individuals to consider the environmental implications of their career choices and to balance work and other aspects of their lives, thereby sustaining a way of life that promotes health, economic security and social justice (EEEP, 2019c).

'Green guidance could be proactive, questioning, probing, reflexive, and client-centred in the new sense. Green guidance questions a simplistic economic growth agenda and points to wider and greener growth approaches' (Plant, 2014).

Developing transversal skills through career guidance

Social and emotional skills and career-management skills are becoming increasingly critical to helping citizens develop the competences needed to become employable within the emergent 4th Industrial Revolution. This is recognised by the European Union in its Council recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning, where the 'personal, social and learning to learn competence' is included (Council of the European Union, 2018).

Jobs requiring a combination of digital and non-cognitive/transversal skills are better paid than others (Joint Research Centre, 2019).

The skill most sought-after by European employers is adaptability to change, mentioned in three out of four vacancy notices in a sample of over 30 million vacancies (Cedefop, 2019).

The concept of 'career-management skills' (CMS) assumes that individuals can influence their own careers, that there are a range of skills which help an individual to manage his/her career in ways that are personally advantageous, and that these skills can be acquired through learning and experience.

Further reflection is needed on how far it is possible to develop these skills through purposeful interventions in career guidance, while the development of CMS to

empower individuals to manage their own careers is seen as the future direction of support.

Career guidance in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has suddenly caused an increase in unemployment, occupational shifting, and a change of job content. With the temporary closure of schools and leisure opportunities, the pandemic has also influenced conceptions of the nature of work, leisure, family life and society. In a world where going into the office, networking and attending an interview are no longer possible or incur risks, career guidance has quickly had to adapt its messages (Hooley et al., 2020).

In such a situation, the role of career-guidance workers is to help people to find solutions to the impact of the crisis on their lives. Qualified career-guidance advisers should also be able to refer clients to other appropriate services, mental-health organisations or welfare support. Moreover, the Covid-19 crisis emphasises once more the importance of implementing ICT and AI solutions in the field of career guidance.

Chapter 3

Mega-trends in career guidance and innovative examples in the European Union and internationally

This chapter discusses four mega-trends in career guidance:

1. the use of ICT and AI in career-guidance systems;
 2. developing career-management skills;
 3. cooperation and coordination mechanisms between key stakeholders in career guidance;
- and
4. the role of parents in young people's career choices.

In addition, there is a brief description of other issues and approaches emerging as trends in the international debate: social justice as an issue in career guidance; bringing career guidance closer to communities; ‘co-constructing’ the careers of guidance counsellors; providing evidence and accountability of career-guidance practices; and the recent ‘co-careering’ approach. For each mega-trend, examples of promising policies and practices from the EU, selected ETF partner countries and internationally are outlined in a table and explored in greater detail in Volume II.

The current mega-trends in most countries regarding career management skills target the following issues:

- integrating career guidance development within wider reforms in education, training and the labour market;
- developing guidance that supports human capital development (including lifelong learning, CMS, employability skills, international learning and career mobility);
- supporting the development of CMS so that individuals are able to access, understand and use information in their decisions;
- ensuring that career development programmes and services support the ability of citizens to manage their own careers;
- designing and implementing CMS programmes for students in schools and in further and higher education settings, as well as for youths and adults in such contexts as public employment services;
- including CMS in school curricula at different education levels (primary, secondary, post-secondary, VET, higher education);
- providing practitioners/teachers with methodological support (e.g. methodological guides, open educational resources, evidence-based research examples, etc.) for implementing career guidance in school curricula/offering career education at different educational levels;
- Supporting transitions (between different education levels, school-to-work, etc.) through the development of CMS.

The current mega-trends in most countries regarding the cooperation and coordination mechanisms between different institutions in charge of career guidance and providers of services can be summarised as:

- developing national cross-sectoral strategies for career development linked to skills, education, employment and social policies;
- enhancing cross-sectoral and multi-professional network-based cooperation;
- developing and resourcing a national body to support coordination in career guidance;
- promoting regional cooperation across sectors and administrations (e.g. education, training, employment, youth, social and health care) to meet local challenges and demands;
- establishing mechanisms to support coordination and cooperation between government departments and agencies with responsibility for career development and associated fields;
- ensuring effective cooperation between educational institutions and public employment services (PES), between career services and the business community, etc.;
- creating mechanisms of cooperation between other organisations involved in career guidance: e.g. representatives of government, employers, trade unions, youth organisations, NGOs/civil society/community organisations.

Chapter 4

Presents a policy overview from three selected ETF partner countries – Kazakhstan, Turkey and Ukraine – and an analysis of the evidence international trends and areas for improvement in those countries; tables present innovative or promising examples from these partner countries on each mega-trend, which are explored in detail in Volume II.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

Key features of an adequate understanding of career guidance for supporting individuals in the context of the 21st century labour market and society overall include:

- **cooperation and collaboration** at policy and practice level (e.g. by a resourced national body) to overcome fragmentation when reaching out to diverse population groups, to enhance policy and service effectiveness, to ensure efficient use of resources, to integrate career guidance into wider policy objectives, such as economic, employment, social, youth, education and training (e.g. lifelong learning) policy goals (e.g. through the provision of integrated services);
- a shift from support for making career and/or education choices at transition points towards **enabling individuals to manage their own education and careers**, with a focus on: increasing lifelong career adaptability and employability through career-management skills development via integration in education curricula (schools and adult education); lifelong information and advice provision; and lifelong guidance²⁰ from early school years onwards throughout life;
- a **multi-channel approach** to the delivery of career-guidance services, also leveraging the opportunities offered by ICT, to meet the needs of diverse clients, increase access to and quality of guidance services (from personalised, group and online provision to self-directed service offers, e.g. to explore future skills needs, and involvement of parents and/or the wider community);
- availability of **quality labour-market information (LMI)** for the use of individuals in their career development and by professionals in guidance provision;
- **professionalism and quality assurance of career-service provision**, including education and training for practitioners (e.g. to ensure readiness for online provision) and practitioner occupational standards, but also provision standards and procedures (e.g. on the common use of LMI and ICT) as well as quality standards for service providers, and monitoring indicators.

This will support the delivery of coordinated, flexible and personalised career-guidance provision.

In relation to the key features listed above, the main lessons to be drawn from the examples in this report are that **decision-makers:**

- ⇒ should see cooperation and coordination in career guidance, involving public but also private, voluntary and community actors, as key to policy effectiveness and efficiency. A fruitful start can be simply to establish regular meetings and exchange (with the overall long-term objective of increasing cooperation and collaboration) as a basis for further establishing in concertation with all stakeholders how cooperation and collaboration, and finally the integration of services, should develop;
- ⇒ should acknowledge the advantages of integrating the development of career-management skills into educational curricula (schools and adult education), given the need for sustainable employability and lifelong career adaptability, because: (a) this provides a better chance of reaching those who are not active, not self-driven, not supported, e.g. by parents, not motivated or not aware of the need to get informed; (b) it empowers individuals to take their career and education into their own hands through developing decision-making, proactive and resiliency skills; (c) it follows a holistic approach (personal, social, educational and career development); (d) it increases individuals' understanding of skills needs due to real-life exposure;
- ⇒ should strive to benefit from ICT as a support for traditional services in career guidance (e.g. harnessing the potential for connecting stakeholders: individuals-employers, schools-employers, practitioners-individuals, etc.; facilitating self/career/opportunity exploration and acquiring skills for deciding and acting; increasing accessibility: offering one-stop-shop information points, providing LMI, etc.); at the same time, the potential of ICT to bring together the different elements of the career-guidance system as an integrative factor needs to be better understood in country contexts, and better used in the sense of strategic systematisation of the use of ICT aimed at remodelling the career-guidance system and services and improving effectiveness and efficiency;
- ⇒ should leverage the role of parents/carers in the career decision-making of young people, taking account of the fact that parents/carers may have great influence but little guidance know-how;
- ⇒ should ensure practitioners have adequate professional competences: to design and implement Career Management Skills (CMS) programmes and curricula for schoolchildren and adults, and/or to use CMS frameworks; to engage parents together with their children, or in programmes specifically for parents; to cooperate and collaborate with different stakeholders such as employers and schools; to increase the personalisation of information and flexibility of delivery methods; to integrate virtual solutions such as the use of career information systems (CIS), labour-market information (LMI) systems, web-based interactive systems, big data, social media, apps, chatbots, etc., thereby always being well-informed and reflecting on the benefits and limitations of each system/means of using ICT; to reconstruct their own mindset and introduce changes in the

organisational culture in order to support client reflexivity (e.g. the 'co-constructing the careers of career counsellors' approach supports professionals in the process of the development and revision of their professional identities); to gain access to professional training and methodological support (e.g. methodological guides, open educational resources, evidence-based research examples, etc.);

⇒ should understand that the use of ICT, CMS development, cooperation and coordination and the involvement of parents are valuable policy/service options if a career-guidance system is to be further developed, in that they address such challenges as effectiveness, efficiency, outreach and adaptation of career guidance to 21st century needs if they are adapted to the respective country context.