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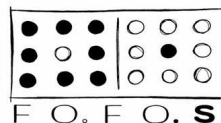
**Location of career counselling and guidance services in partners' countries –  
comparative report**

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**TURUN KAUPPAKORKEAKOULU**  
Turku School of Economics and Business Administration



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## **Introduction**

The aim of this publication is to characterize Polish system of vocational counselling. Some of the matters described herein are: definition of career guidance and vocational counsellor, legal regulations for the functioning of the vocational counselling system in Poland, forms of guidance, institutions, companies and organisations operating in this field, some of the more relevant initiatives having influence on the increase in effectiveness and quality of counselling services, as well as forms of support for unemployed persons planning to set up their own business.

This publication draws on report materials from government and self-government institutions, as well as scientific publications on vocational counselling and social policy on the Internet.

## **Preface**

Contemporary European labour market is characterized by high instability. Due to the impact of many factors such as new technologies development, demographic crisis and political transformations, the situation of both employees and employers is not stable. One of today's most developmental areas of economy is the sector of services, whereas the importance of production sector has considerably diminished. As a result of far-reaching specialization and development of outsourcing, the demand for human resources in the services sector is constantly growing. This trend is conducive to establishment of new small and medium-sized enterprises employing a small number of persons, as well as one-person businesses. The structure of these enterprises allows them to adjust quickly to market changes, much faster than it is the case with companies having many employees. Another characteristic of the contemporary market is the high variability of demand for specialists. When choosing an occupation, young people cannot be guided by current market trends only; they should also carefully analyse profession forecasts and investigate which areas of economy are going to be the fastest developing ones in the future. Only those who use this information while planning their educational path will not have to cope with the problem of searching for employment and will not face the necessity of quick retraining. A very attractive alternative both for persons who lost their jobs and those who are only just starting their careers is self-employment. It allows them to be independent, but requires creativity and familiarity with many matters necessary for a business to function.

It is that issue that is the subject of the Self-employment project carried out under the Leonardo da Vinci programme by a consortium comprised of partners from Poland, Finland, Romania and Austria. The aim of the project is to work out guidelines for development of vocational counselling and support services available for individuals who decided to become self-employed. This Report is the outcome of research into the situation and the forms of vocational guidance in each of the countries as well as the place of preparation for and assistance in taking up self-employment.

An analysis of the study reports prepared by the partners results in the conclusion that in each of the four countries in question vocational guidance is understood in a similar way: as assistance and support in choosing a school (educational path) and occupation, planning one's professional career, defining one's interests and skills etc. In Poland and Romania vocational guidance (counselling) is deeply connected with the educational system, whereas Finland has focused strongly on education at every age (self-improvement). In Austria, just like in Poland and Romania, due to the necessity of deciding on a occupational profile at a very early age (school age), vocational guidance is present at schools.

What is interesting it is in Austria alone that there are no statutory regulations concerning activities connected with vocational guidance. In an OECD report on the labour market published in 2002, Austrian vocational guidance system was evaluated rather low. Perhaps development of legal regulations will help to systematize those activities. In the other countries counselling activity is controlled by two government departments: education and labour. Education-related legislation regulates and defines programme lines for vocational guidance, which is an inherent part of school education (educational path, psychological and pedagogic centres etc.). The labour department aims its regulations and activities primarily at the unemployed, who require assistance in finding a new job, schooling and retraining. In Poland these tasks are executed by Employment Offices, Education Centres etc. and similar services, even if named differently, perform the same tasks in the other countries.

A vital part of the vocational guidance study are its forms and methods. Considering vocational guidance as an element of educational paths, methods used are characteristic of individual educational stages. It is valuable to learn about various professions by visiting work places (a practice used in Poland), engaging children and youth in doing some simple

works typical for a given job etc. Much more specialization is involved in vocational guidance aimed at unemployed people, graduates looking for a job, availing themselves of career services, employment offices, education centres etc. Analysing the situation in the partner countries of the project, it is noticeable that the forms used in vocational guidance are similar. They include individual and group interviews, psychological tests, various other tests used e.g. to check a person's job preferences or state of health, as well as publications, guidebooks, audio-visual materials with descriptions of the most popular occupations, and web sites.

In the final part of the analysis, the authors ask the question about the place and the method of promoting self-employment in vocational guidance systems in the countries under consideration. In Poland, unfortunately, there are no separate initiatives concerned specifically with self-employment. There are no special support or training programmes available for individuals who wish to become self-employed, either. Some Polish countrywide programmes worth mentioning, even though they aren't aimed at self-employment but encourage entrepreneurship and individual initiative as such, are "First Job" or "First Business". Under those programmes, subject-related and financial assistance is offered to individuals planning to start their own business activity in general. The same can be said of Finland, though in that country entrepreneurial attitudes are being developed by means of educational paths starting at an early school age. These actions, under the auspices of the education department are then continued at higher levels of education. Furthermore, the unemployed who decide to found their own business are offered financial and informative support. These activities are in the charge of the labour department. As for Austria, the report's authors have observed a deficiency of projects or programmes directed specifically at individuals who are or plan to become self-employed. There is a system of vocational guidance organisations and offices that provide training services in the country, but there are none specialized in assisting one-person businesses. The authors point out that among persons taking up this kind of activity there is a particularly marked lack of knowledge of the market and ways of functioning in it. An organisation involved in building up entrepreneurial attitudes by means of various forms of education in Romania is the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Development Agency. Elements of enterprise promotion and basic knowledge of business management are introduced into curricula. Actions are also taken to support such initiatives, both financially and information-wise. The authors also mention a number of one-time initiatives and projects that propagate the ideas of entrepreneurship and activity in this area.

The analysis of the above described issue has shown that it is essential to endeavor to create an effective formula for vocational guidance aimed at individuals who wish to start one-person businesses. That work seems all the more important as self-employment may turn out to be the only possibility for a growing number of people to earn a living and it also provides them with an opportunity to regulate their working hours and performed tasks by themselves.

A further part of the report includes a list of institutions, associations, human resources centres etc. that may be helpful in defining and implementing occupational plans.

Four following chapters present the situation of vocational guidance in each partner country of the project individually: Austria, Finland, Poland and Romania.

## I. STATE OF THE ART IN POLAND

### 1. Definition of vocational guidance/vocational counsellor

**Vocational guidance** in Poland (also called career guidance or counselling) “is based on the theoretical perspective that the process of a human being’s career planning and development starts in early childhood and lasts for the whole life period”<sup>1</sup>. The main goal of vocational counselling is to **render support to individuals in preparing themselves for carrying out their tasks in the world of labour.**

#### **Vocational counselling in Poland falls under the jurisdiction of two government departments:**

- education department – the Ministry of National Education and Sport – guidance for school children.
- labour department – the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy – guidance for adults.

There are also commercial organisations in Poland that provide services in the field of personnel consulting, i.e. services related to selecting highly qualified personnel that meet the needs of employers.

#### 1.1. Organisation of vocational guidance under the Ministry of Education

Services in the field of vocational guidance for school children are provided by psychological and pedagogic counselling centres and include: vocational counselling for children and teenagers as well as help for teachers and parents in connection with raising and educating the children.

There were 590 psychological and pedagogic counselling centres operating in Poland in the year 2000, including 6 specialised centres devoted primarily or exclusively to vocational guidance<sup>2</sup>.

Fig. 1 The number of psychological and pedagogic counselling centres in each province (voivodship)



Source: [www.praca.gov.pl/tvc/doc/Poradnictwo%20zawodowe%20w%20Polsce.doc](http://www.praca.gov.pl/tvc/doc/Poradnictwo%20zawodowe%20w%20Polsce.doc)

<sup>1</sup> W. Trzeciak, W. Kreft, *Review of career guidance policies in 11 acceding and candidate countries - synthesis report, July 2003*, [www.praca.gov.pl/nczpz/dokumenty.html](http://www.praca.gov.pl/nczpz/dokumenty.html)

<sup>2</sup> *Vocational Counselling in Poland*, [www.praca.gov.pl/tvc/doc/Poradnictwo%20zawodowe%20w%20Polsce.doc](http://www.praca.gov.pl/tvc/doc/Poradnictwo%20zawodowe%20w%20Polsce.doc)  
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The number of counselling centres in each province varies fairly substantially, depending on the different levels of population density and numbers of schools in individual areas.

The number of vocational guidance counsellors employed in psychological and pedagogic counselling centres is about 1500. They have a higher education – at least a Master's [magister] degree. Over 30% of counsellors have completed post-graduate studies in vocational guidance. The main group of vocational counsellors is formed by teachers and psychologists (about 90%)<sup>3</sup>. A majority of them systematically raise their qualifications during brief training and continuing education courses, mainly in the area of preparing pupils by active methods to choose a vocation and break into the field chosen, issuing opinions concerning occupations, applying diagnostic techniques, etc.

### **Type and scope of services rendered**

In accordance with their framework statute, the tasks of the psychological and pedagogic counselling centres include:

- vocational guidance
- counselling for teenagers (including prevention of addiction)
- family counselling
- help for handicapped children and teenagers
- early diagnosis and rehabilitation.

This type of vocational guidance consists of granting help to children and teenagers in choosing the direction of their education and vocation and in planning their occupational career. The most important activities in this area are:

- collecting educational and vocational information and making it available
- diagnostics with respect to intellectual capacity, personality, talents and interests carried out with the help of various tools, written tests and instrument tests
- direct work with pupils, in particular:
  - issuing opinions qualifying pupils with various conditions and health problems to continue their education
  - work with pupils who have fallen several years behind their peers in their education
  - work with pupils from backgrounds lacking in discipline
- activities aimed at pupil groups at various levels of education, including:
  - lectures acquainting them with particular occupations
  - meetings at specialised vocational guidance centres, occupation-acquaintance offices or vocational information centres
  - questionnaire surveys concerning choice of school and career
  - workshops
- activities addressed to the parents of pupils – lectures, talks, information meetings
- conducting, in conjunction with district superintendent offices and secondary schools, information points concerning schools during the school recruitment period
- organising job exchanges and fairs with the participation of other institutions such as schools and training centres, employers, artisans' guilds, labour offices and local government institutions

In performing their jobs, vocational counsellors make use of a wide array of information concerning:

- occupations/careers (files on occupations, descriptions and other information materials,
- vocational schools and the qualifications necessary to attend them,
- liberal arts secondary schools, educational profiles and languages taught,
- post-secondary schools and institutions of higher learning,
- private schools,
- criteria and conditions for acceptance to schools,
- recruitment results,

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



- special centres for the education of handicapped, mentally retarded and neglected people,
- courses and other forms of extracurricular education available within the given commune [gmina], county [powiat] or province [województwo].

Counselling centres are also provided with some information materials developed and published by the National Labour Office, such as the seven-volume Guide to Occupations, which includes descriptions of 542 occupations.

Psychological and pedagogic counselling centres co-operate primarily with:

- educational organisations (district superintendent offices, various post-primary schools and institutions of higher education, provincial methodological centres and other teacher training centres),
- academic employees of universities and institutions of higher education (including Jagiellonian University in Cracow, University of Wrocław, Warsaw University, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and University of Łódź as well as the pedagogic academies in Częstochowa, Bydgoszcz and Zielona Góra),
- vocational training workshops, artisans' organisations, voluntary work corps, bishops' curia, provincial army headquarters, co-operatives of disabled persons, institutions under the ministry of health (school and workplace medical posts),
- provincial and county labour offices.

### **Recipients of the services**

Psychological and pedagogic counselling centres provide care and assistance to children and teenagers age 0-19. About 7% of the entire population within the statutory age group receive direct assistance of various kinds from counselling centres.

## **1.2. Vocational guidance under the Ministry of Labour**

For the purpose of counselling services provided in Polish labour offices the following definition by Ray Lamb<sup>4</sup> has been adopted:

***"Vocational guidance is a process, in which the counsellor helps his client (a student) to reach a better understanding of him- or herself with reference to the labour environment, in order to enable the client to make a realistic choice or change of occupation, or to reach an adequate vocational adaptation level".***

The vocational guidance-related tasks provided for by the Employment and Anti-Unemployment Act of 14 December 1994, its amendments, and related legal acts are conducted by 373 district labour offices and 51 vocational career information and planning centres.

The vocational guidance carried out by labour offices is based on six principles; namely it is:

- free of charge,
- commonly available,
- equally available for all,
- voluntary,
- characteristic of free choice of profession and work place,
- confidential.

### **Type and scope of services rendered**

Vocational guidance counselling for adults is divided into three levels:

1. vocational guidance counsellors working in county labour offices (subordinated to the county self-government administration, i.e. the county executive [starosta]),

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<sup>4</sup> R. Lamb, *Doradztwo zawodowe w zarysie*, Warsaw 1998, p. 9.  
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2. vocational guidance counsellors working in vocational career information and planning centres of provincial labour offices
3. vocational guidance counsellors working in branches of vocational career information and planning centres subordinated to the head [*marszałek*] of the provincial self-government.

The tasks of vocational guidance counsellors employed in labour offices consist of:

- granting information about occupations, the labour market and training and educational opportunities, drawn from databases, in printed, audio-visual or other modern forms based on computer technology,
- granting advice facilitating clients' choice of occupation, change in qualifications and finding or changing jobs by means of the administration of psychological methods, especially tests determining vocational interests and aptitudes,
- inspiring, organising and conducting group activities that enable the provision of vocational assistance and advice to the unemployed and other people seeking jobs,
- granting information and advice to employers concerning the selection of candidates for jobs requiring special psychological or physical pre-dispositions.

The tasks of vocational career information and planning centres consist of:

- assisting county labour offices by rendering specialised services to the unemployed and people seeking jobs in the field of career planning by using psychometric tools and information resources in various forms
- conducting classes designed to give clients skills in looking for and obtaining employment
- collecting, updating, editing and disseminating regional vocational information
- organising and co-ordinating the development of vocational guidance services and vocational information in the province and giving support to job clubs

Vocational guidance counsellors employed in county labour offices (there are 627 such counsellors in the country<sup>5</sup>) assist the client in identifying his or her strong points as well as skills and qualifications useful at a job (understanding oneself). This self-understanding and self-evaluation becomes a foundation for choosing an occupation, education or additional vocational training leading to developing an action plan based on a realistic (achievable) choice of occupation, including both the work capacity and position, or change thereof. The client's choice made under guidance of or with assistance from a counsellor should enable the client to solve his or her problem, which usually is comprised of retaining employment or entering the labour market. An important part in the counselling process for this group is played by the information imparted and a whole set of tools for self-information.

Vocational guidance is therefore a service leading to shape the human resources capital according to the needs of the labour market. Vocational guidance services provided by labour offices to adults, i.e. to the specific group clients comprised of unemployed people, people seeking jobs, and employers, are focused mainly on those elements of the counselling process which result in increasing the individual's career potential, and in consequence make it possible to solve the essential problems concerning entering, returning to or maintaining one's position on the labour market.

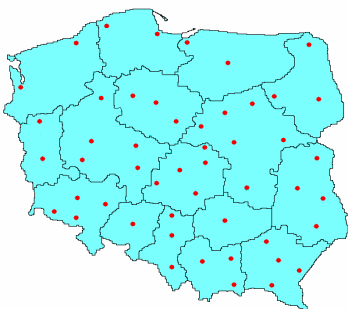
Counsellors in vocational career information and planning centres

Vocational information centres were established in Poland in 1994 under an agreement concluded between the labour ministries of Poland and Germany and they are an adapted form of similar institutions functioning in the German employment service. In 1999, these vocational information centres were transformed into a network of vocational career information and planning centres. They hold the status of autonomous departments of provincial labour offices.

**Fig. 2. Location of Vocational Career Information and Planning Centres in Poland**  
(Source: [www.praca.gov.pl/tvc/doc/Poradnictwo%20zawodowe%20w%20Polsce.doc](http://www.praca.gov.pl/tvc/doc/Poradnictwo%20zawodowe%20w%20Polsce.doc))

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<sup>5</sup> A. Miler, *Informacja o instytucjonalnej obsłudze rynku pracy*, Rynek Pracy /Labour Market/ No.3(147) 2005, p.77  
PL/04/C/F/RF-84151



Each centre employs a staff of about five counsellors who provide assistance to categories of clients who could not obtain it from county labour offices. The centres are aimed at various client groups – unemployed people, people at risk of losing their jobs and people seeking jobs. Vocational guidance counsellors conduct individual counselling, hold classes for groups, provide information on occupations and also render specialised services in the area of career planning.

One task of counsellors employed at the centres is to collect, update, edit and disseminate regional vocational information. Another important element in the work of counsellors are activities to make vocational guidance services known to the public by taking part in events such as job fairs, educational fairs, enterprise fairs, job exchanges, career days and student salons.

Labour offices employ a total of 703 vocational guidance counsellors: 460 counsellors in county labour offices and 243 in vocational career information and planning centres. Counsellors hold university degrees: 41.1% in teaching, 16.4% in sociology, 15.5% in psychology and 25% in other specialisations<sup>6</sup>.

### **Recipients of services**

Vocational guidance in labour offices is geared toward rendering services for various categories of clients, with a special emphasis on the unemployed and people in various phases of their careers looking for jobs. These can be young people who intend to choose an occupation, people with job experience who wish to find a new occupation, people at risk of losing work and people who have difficulty finding it. Many clients also expect advice in the area of new techniques and the acquisition of skills related to finding a job.

**The aim of counselling services** provided to clients who are unemployed or looking for a job is to help the clients realise:

1. their capabilities and interests from the aspect of vocational adaptation,
2. their job (employment) opportunities on the labour market,
3. economic conditions of specific jobs and occupations,
4. contraindications and specific requirements from the aspect of both the minimum and best vocational adaptation,
5. methods of searching for a job,
6. methods of contacting an employer<sup>7</sup>.

Or, according to another classification:

A) for individuals

- to enable them to make appropriate choices (the right decisions) with regard to education and occupation,
- to facilitate the occupational start for young people (the transition from school education to a career),
- to improve their knowledge of the education and job possibilities offered.

B) for governments and societies

- rational human resources management,
- reducing the gap between labour force supply and labour market demands

The main objective of vocational guidance is **to render support to individuals in preparing themselves for carrying out their tasks in the world of labour**. However, there are many differences in the work of vocational counsellors, related both to the nature of the institutions

<sup>6</sup> *Vocational Counselling in Poland*, [www.praca.gov.pl/tvc/doc/Poradnictwo%20zawodowe%20w%20Polsce.doc](http://www.praca.gov.pl/tvc/doc/Poradnictwo%20zawodowe%20w%20Polsce.doc)

<sup>7</sup> *Poradnictwo zawodowe (Vocational guidance)*, <http://www.wup-rzeszow.pl/cipkz/?cPath=6/28/4>

they work for and the type of problems the clients address them to help with. This wide array of vocational guidance objectives in itself results in a number of differences between the work of vocational counsellors at labour offices and schools.

### Characteristics of vocational guidance at school and at a labour office<sup>8</sup>

Guidance in educational system	Guidance for the unemployed
The main problem is the choice of occupation. Solving this problem does not mean that the chosen occupation equals future employment.	The main problem is finding employment. Choice of employment (and often change thereof) means selecting a specific job or even entire career.
All possibilities concerning the choice of occupation are open and may be unrelated to current labour market potential.	The choice of occupation is strictly limited by the local labour market possibilities. It even often comes to capping the choices. The freedom of choice is doubly restricted: a) by subordinating one's fantasies and dreams to the discipline of market reality, b) by subordinating one's personal interests to general economic and social interests.
Counselling problems are solved within one group on the same stage of development: school children and teenagers who have never worked before.	Counselling problems concern various social groups, the majority of which already have a developed vocational awareness, specific past and work experience. The main problem is unemployment and to solve it is an issue of here and now. The solution must be immediate, tailored to the individual life history and, as far as possible, take into consideration foreseeable future occurrences.
Guidance services are provided by specialists with a precisely defined status and a stable organisational backup.	Guidance services are often provided by random people, trained to work with clients in a dual role of office clerks and counsellors. There is no clearly and comprehensively defined legal status. Their roles are often vague and shaped by the current needs and decision makers' concepts (that's one opinion). Below this table there is another opinion on the subject and education-related requirements.
Educational process supports personality development of young people who are preparing to enter the social life and fulfil their occupational roles.	It is a process of social and psychological rehabilitation of the group of unadapted people (unemployment is a form of social impairment)

This comparison of characteristics results in a dual image of vocational guidance. This dual image pertains above all to the activities of vocational counsellors at schools and labour offices.

At a labour office a counsellor operates within a specific system subordinated firstly to the rules of administrative proceedings, and secondly to employment agency services, the essential objective of which is to match job offers with unemployed persons. Other services (trainings, psychological tests, vocational guidance) are only supplementary to the basic one and are rendered in accordance with the agency requirements. As a result of this state of affairs, vocational guidance provided by counsellors at labour offices bears the mark of

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

services promoting employment, and its effects are measured largely by the number of clients referred to employment.

Another index characteristic of the vocational counsellors' work is the number of „clients served“. This gives rise to the risk of giving in to “statistical vocational guidance“. In such situation, one can suspect that in order to achieve a “high statistical performance“ the counsellor may reduce the counselling process to the barest minimum, thereby depriving the client of a possibility to make an in-depth diagnosis of the problem and find a lasting solution. Another feature typical for the guidance for unemployed persons is its broad spectrum of clients being at various stages of intellectual and moral development, having different accumulated experience. This variety of clients requires the use of differentiated counselling strategies. Counselling programmes and methods used must reconcile such contradictions as sensitivity to specific problems of some particular individuals or groups of clients only with the ability to satisfy the needs of all clients<sup>9</sup>.

**To recapitulate, we can differentiate between four basic aspects of vocational guidance:**

1. Vocational guidance as a system of institutions, social communities, material equipment organisations and tools, ideas and value systems.
2. Vocational guidance as a set of varied and complex measures aimed at conveying certain knowledge and values to society members in an institution or organisation.
3. Vocational guidance as the level of awareness within the society, the degree of preparation for choosing an occupation, the store of knowledge, and the level of being interested in this subject matters.
4. Vocational guidance as a system of social rehabilitation and re-adaptation to the labour market for the population of unadapted individuals (the unemployed) and persons at risk of alienation from the labour market.

## **2. Legal regulations**

The fundamental legal act upon which rests the obligation of organising and supporting vocational guidance by the public authorities of Poland is the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2 April 1997.

### **2.1. Legal acts regulating vocational guidance under the Ministry of Education**

- The Education System Act of 7 September 1991 (Dz. U. /Journal of Laws/ of 1996 No. 67, item 329 and No. 106, item 496) as amended
- The Directive of the Minister of National Education of 15 January 2001 concerning the rules for granting and organising psychological and pedagogic assistance (Dz. U. /Journal of Laws/ No. 13, item 110)
- The Directive of the Minister of National Education of 15 January 2001 concerning the detailed rules regulating the functioning of public psychological and pedagogic counselling centres and other specialised public counselling centres and the framework statute for these centres (Dz. U. /Journal of Laws/ No. 13, item 109)

### **2.2. Legal acts regulating vocational guidance under the Ministry of Labour**

- the Employment and Anti-Unemployment Act of 14 December 1994 (Dz. U. /Journal of Laws/ of 1997 No. 25, item 128, as amended)

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

- and the related Directive issued by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy on 9 February 2000 concerning the detailed rules for conducting employment agencies, vocational guidance, organising training for the unemployed, establishing methodological support for the needs of information and vocational guidance and organising and financing job clubs (Dz. U. /Journal of Laws/ No. 12, item 146, art. 36).
- the Act of 20 December 2003 amending the Employment and Anti-Unemployment Act and the Education System Act (Dz. U. /Journal of Laws/ of 22 January 2003)
- the Employment and Anti-Unemployment Act of 14 December 1994 (Dz. U. /Journal of Laws/ of 1995 No. 1, item 1).
- the Employment and Labour Market Institutions Promotion Act of 20 April 2004 (Dz. U. /Journal of Laws/ No. 99, item 100).
- the Directive of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 20 October 2004 concerning the procedure for granting job licences to employment agents and vocational counsellors.
- the Directive of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 1 December 2004 concerning employment agencies register.
- The National Strategy for Employment and Human Resources Development 2000-2006 – a document adopted by the Council of Ministers on the 4 January 2000.

### **3. Organisations/institutions involved in and/or providing vocational (personnel) counselling services**

At the government level, the vocational guidance and information services are provided mainly by two ministries:

#### **3.1. Ministry of National Education and Sport - Vocational and Continuous Education Department**

acting Director:  
Halina CIEŚLAK  
ph.: 622-36-91  
acting Deputy Director:  
Ewa KONIKOWSKA-KRUK  
ph.: 622-36-91

#### **3.2. Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour**

and self-government units responsible for the employment policy: offices of provincial authorities (Urzędy Marszałkowskie), offices of county executives (Starostwa Powiatowe). The operating principles for these institutions have been described in the first chapter (1.2).

#### **3.3. Private vocational counselling**

Private vocational counselling in Poland hardly exists, however it is expected that it will develop soon. Some activities of that kind are undertaken by:

- Personnel consultancy agencies
- NGO organisations
- Internet portals focused on job offers and HR services

such as:

[www.hrk.pl](http://www.hrk.pl)



[www.praca.onet.pl](http://www.praca.onet.pl)  
[www.topjobs.pl](http://www.topjobs.pl)  
[www.praca.money.pl](http://www.praca.money.pl)  
[www.praca.wp.pl](http://www.praca.wp.pl)  
[www.jobs.pl](http://www.jobs.pl)  
[www.jobpilot.pl](http://www.jobpilot.pl)  
[www.pracuj.pl](http://www.pracuj.pl)  
[www.grafika.pl](http://www.grafika.pl)  
[www.apraca.pl](http://www.apraca.pl)  
[www.cvonline.pl](http://www.cvonline.pl)

and others.

In Poland there are more than 700 entities working in the personnel agencies sector. This number includes both **international counselling firms** providing a whole scope of services and **medium-sized** and **smaller Polish firms** or **mixed capital firms**.

The scope of services provided by firms from this sector is very wide.

The firms' offer covers:

- comprehensive expertise in the field of personnel management, i.e.: personal strategy development, employment analyses, managing the recruitment process for different positions, employees development and planning, designing periodic evaluation systems, guidance in the field of payment and motivation, personnel auditing,
- as well as a legal, financial and organisational guidance.

The majority of firms from this sector have recently started offering, in connection with the change in the economical situation, outplacement support services. Programmes of this type include assorted support provided to dismissed employees, including also some forms of vocational counselling. The primary objective of these measures is to help the dismissed employees to find their place on the labour market and adjust to the new situation.

NGO organisations carry out various programmes, especially for the unemployed people and students from secondary schools, which aim at preparing the participants for active and effective behaviour on the labour market. A frequent form of work within projects of this type is group counselling.

Variants of vocational guidance appear also in the Internet portals which organise chats with personnel managers from big companies to advise job seekers how to succeed on the job market. Lately, one of the Polish job portals has launched a widely promoted programme of workshops for students and graduates seeking employment and work practice. This may be a sign of private companies' awakening interest in offering vocational counselling services<sup>10</sup>.

### **3.4. Selected specialised organisations providing and/or supporting vocational guidance services**

#### ➤ **Methodological Centre for Vocational Information and Guidance of the National Labour Office**

(The Centre functioned within the structures of the National Labour Office<sup>11</sup> until the end of March 2002; since then, the Centre and its tasks have been taken over by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy<sup>12</sup>)

In accordance with the directive of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of 9 February 2000<sup>13</sup>, the Centre provides methodological support to labour offices and vocational career information and planning centres under provincial labour offices.

The tasks of the Centre included:

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<sup>10</sup> J. Bokser, E. Banaszak, *Vocational guidance in Poland*, quot. mod.

<sup>11</sup> Krajowy Urząd Pracy (KUP) – National Labour Office

<sup>12</sup> Ministerstwo Gospodarki i Pracy (MGiP) – Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour

<sup>13</sup> The directive concerned the detailed rules for conducting employment agencies, vocational guidance, organising training for the unemployed, establishing methodological support for the needs of information and vocational guidance and organising and financing job clubs



- a) developing, collecting and upgrading vocational information,
- b) developing, collecting, upgrading and adapting vocational guidance methods and techniques,
- c) disseminating vocational information, methods and techniques,
- d) developing training programmes and materials and conducting training courses for vocational guidance counsellors and other employees of labour offices in the area of vocational information and guidance.

The Centre is authorised to recommend materials, methods and techniques to county labour offices and information and career planning centres of the voivodship labour offices.

The Centre has updated sets of information and delivered them to labour offices free of charge. Those activities mainly concerned forms of information that could be realised at the central level, for example sets of leaflets on occupations, characteristics of occupations and the *Doradca 2000* computer programme. New publications on occupations have been designed for the needs of vocational counsellors, for example *Handbook for assessing occupations from the standpoint of various kinds of handicaps*. Some materials have been disseminated by the Centre through its website.

The Centre has played an important role in providing labour offices with psychological measurement tools, such as: General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB), Vocational Preference Inventory, and the Self-Directed Search by J. Holland. It has supplied counsellors with test materials every year. It has also organised training courses on the administration of tests for newly employed vocational guidance counsellors. Moreover, the Methodological Centre has implemented vocational guidance methods such as the "Course of Inspiration", "Educational Method", "Balance of Competencies" and others. Methodological Centre staff have prepared and edited handbooks and materials as well as training programmes for vocational guidance counsellors; it has also conducted didactic courses.

The Methodological Centre has devoted much attention to preparing publications from the "Informative and methodological notebooks for vocational guidance counsellors" series; so far, it has published 29 such notebooks.

The Methodological Centre also conducts activities related to the development of vocational guidance on the European level by carrying out projects under the Leonardo da Vinci Programme. The National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance (NRCVG) is a particularly important project under this programme. The activities of the Methodological Centre have made it possible for counsellors from labour offices in Rzeszów, Olsztyn, Białystok, Cracow, Katowice, Gdańsk and elsewhere to participate more broadly in Leonardo da Vinci Programme projects.

Furthermore, the Methodological Centre has co-operated with many other partners. Owing to the interdisciplinary character of its work, its most important partners have been institutions of higher education. For example, the Methodological Centre has worked with Jagiellonian University in adapting and standardising psychological tests and in developing an education programme for Eurocounsellors. It has co-operated with Łódź University in educating and raising the qualifications of vocational guidance counsellors. The Methodological Centre's co-operation with the Central Institute for Labour Protection concerned the creation of descriptions of occupations. The Methodological Centre has also worked with the Association of School and Vocational Guidance Counsellors of the Republic of Poland in building a model for the integration of vocational guidance counsellors who work in psychological and pedagogic counselling centres as well as labour offices.

The activities undertaken so far under the Leonardo da Vinci Programme have also contributed to an increase in the number of foreign partners interested in co-operating with the Methodological Centre in the field of vocational guidance.

### ➤ **Job Clubs**

The first job clubs arose spontaneously prior to 1993 and functioned according to amateurish programmes written up by their leaders. Later, a uniform modular club programme was developed and disseminated within the labour offices system and standards for the functioning of clubs were drawn up. Thanks to steady financial support, the number of job clubs has risen steadily. Moreover, a new job clubs programme and programme for training

club leaders have been developed (on the basis of the handbooks entitled Job Club Programme and Job Club Leader Abilities). Both programmes have been developed as part of a World Bank project. Job clubs have been equipped with modern audio-visual devices (bought with funds from a loan) which facilitate its sessions and make them more attractive. The job club programme has also been disseminated by the National Labour Office to institutions other than labour offices interested in organising such clubs.

The main purpose of the job club programme is to increase the activeness and efficacy of the unemployed in looking for work themselves. It prepares unemployed people to return to the labour market and equips them with the skills they need to move within this market. These goals are attained by means of intense work by both the club leader and club participants. Job clubs offer unemployed people and people seeking jobs motivation and lessons in the practical skills necessary for finding a job.

The activities at the club are conducted by the club leader, who performs several roles simultaneously:

- animator and instigator: acts as the inspiring person, creates an appropriate atmosphere in the club through his/her vision of a successful future for every club participant;
- counsellor: reacts to people's feelings, offers positive reinforcement, builds confidence;
- teacher: conveys knowledge and skills.

The leaders of job clubs sponsored by the ministry of labour are specially trained employees of labour offices who are simultaneously vocational guidance counsellors or employment agents.

People who are blind or visually impaired have also been provided the opportunity to take advantage of job club services owing to the preparation of the relevant handbooks in Braille and their dissemination through the labour offices network.

In 2003 a total of 620 job clubs<sup>14</sup> organised by county labour offices and organisations co-operating with them were in operation countrywide. This number includes all job clubs that conducted activities the entire time with at least one group. There were 543 job clubs operating within the structures of county labour offices, and another 77 were run by organisations and other institutions. A total of 59,891 people took part in job club activities in 2003. These were mainly unemployed people: 92.7% of all programme participants.

#### ➤ **Career Promotion Offices for Graduates of Institutions of Higher Learning (Career Services)**

**The first Career Service was opened in Poland in 1993 at Copernicus University in Toruń thanks to the initiative of John C. Franks, Head of the Careers Service at the University of Hull, United Kingdom, and the support of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy as well as the National Labour Office.**

In 1997 Career Services were started at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Marie Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Wrocław University and Technical University, Gliwice Technical University, Cracow Technical University, Kielce Technical University, the Economic Academy of Katowice and Warsaw Agricultural University.

**These Career Promotion Offices for Students and Graduates of Institutions of Higher Learning (simply called "Career Services") have declared their intent to co-operate within the framework of the Polish Network of Career Services (OSBK). The Network was joined by only a part of the 32 Career Services operating in Poland.**

The agreement on creation of the Network was signed by the Heads of the Career Services in December 1998. Career Services that wish to join the Network must meet certain strictly defined programme standards, which include:

- providing vocational guidance counselling (to individuals and groups),
- providing information about the labour market and opportunities of raising one's occupational qualifications,

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<sup>14</sup> Information about the activities of job clubs in 2003, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour, Labour Market Department, Warsaw, May 2004

- collecting, classifying and making available offers for jobs, apprenticeships and internships,
- keeping databases of students looking for jobs,
- seeking and maintaining contact with employers,
- promoting the idea of Career Services and contributing to the establishment of such services at other institutions of higher education.

The main clients of Career Services are:

- **students and graduates** who wish to obtain career advice and information about the labour market,
- **employers** who seek the most appropriate candidates for apprenticeships and job vacancies,
- **institutions of higher education** that wish to verify their educational structure and programmes by means of data gathered through Career Services.

The support Career Offices provide to students and graduates in order to facilitate their entering the labour market actively consists of:

- conducting counselling interviews,
- preparing the client to write a CV (résumé) and a cover letter and to take job interviews,
- notifying the clients of opportunities to raise or broaden their occupational qualifications,
- presenting the prospects for professional careers,
- informing the clients about changes in the local labour market,
- familiarising the clients with European recruitment standards,

Contacts with employers are initiated and maintained by:

- collecting information about companies operating in the country,
- obtaining attractive job offers,
- conducting recruitment and preliminary selection at the order of employers,
- arranging for company presentations at institutions of higher education,
- organising the PROFESJA job fair

- **Voluntary Work Corps (Ochotnicze Hufce Pracy)** employ about 92 job club leaders who perform the role of vocational guidance counsellors

There are Mobile Centres of Vocational Information operating within the framework of the **Voluntary Work Corps**.

The network of Mobile Centres of Vocational Information has been organised on the basis of the Youth Work and Education Centres functioning within the VWC framework. Development of 49 Mobile Centres of Vocational Information has created a thick network of offices covering the country. The entire system consists of 50 Mobile Centres of Vocational Information, including the Methodological Headquarters of Vocational Information, which is responsible for the coordination of the activity and development of the network of Mobile Centres of Vocational Information countrywide.

Mobile Centres of Vocational Information render their services in the form of:

- individual vocational guidance;
- group vocational guidance;
- individual vocational information;
- group vocational information.

The tasks of the Methodological Headquarters of Vocational Information include:

- 🚧 developing, collecting and upgrading vocational information;
- 🚧 developing, collecting and adapting vocational guidance methods and techniques;
- 🚧 disseminating vocational information and vocational guidance methods and techniques;

- ✚ developing training materials and programmes as well as conducting trainings for VWC Job Club leaders and vocational counsellors concerning vocational information and guidance.

In the first half of 2005 the Mobile Centres' activity involved a total of 101 502 young people, including 73 673 persons who availed themselves of the services of vocational counsellors during 1 995 mobile sessions. The Mobile Centres' vocational counsellors gave a total of 3 242 individual consultations, including 1 224 during mobile sessions. A total of 3 569 group informative meetings were conducted, which involved 75 845 participants. Informative meetings for groups during mobile sessions totalled 2 610 and were attended by 58 446 persons<sup>15</sup>.

Voluntary Work Corps carry out also many projects with the aim to increase both the education standards and the employment rate. The more important of those projects are:

- *Twoja wiedza – Twój sukces (Your Knowledge – Your success)*
- *Szansa 13-18 (Opportunity 13-18)*
- *Szansa 18-24 (Opportunity 18-24)*
- *Agrostart OHP (VWC Agrostart)*
- *Bezpieczny Szlak (Safe Trail)*
- *Pierwsza Praca (First Job)*

Some of these programmes is financed from the means of the European Social Fund or within the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme<sup>16</sup>.

- **Polish State Railways Agency for Retraining and Employment (Kolejowa Agencja Aktywizacji Zawodowej)** employs about 73 counsellors<sup>17</sup>

This institution renders vocational guidance counselling and employment agency services for state railway employees who have lost their jobs as a result of the restructuring of the state railway enterprise. These services are primarily geared toward retraining railway employees by organising workshops on how to search for and find jobs or start a business.

The vocational guidance counsellors working in this agency have been selected from former administrative and line employees who were then trained in a specially designed series of training courses for their new jobs.

- **Military Outplacement Centre in Warsaw (Wojskowe Centrum Aktywizacji Zawodowej w Warszawie)** employs about 60 vocational counsellors<sup>18</sup>

This organisation provides vocational guidance counselling and employment agency services to professional soldiers who have lost their jobs as a result of the restructuring of the military services. Thus, the recipients of the Centre's services are former military personnel who intend to find employment in civilian institutions.

The persons providing vocational guidance services in the Military Outplacement Centre have obtained their counselling qualifications by participating in specially planned training courses.

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<sup>15</sup> [http://www.ohp.pl/ohp/index.jsp?place=Menu07&news\\_cat\\_id=330&layout=2&lang=](http://www.ohp.pl/ohp/index.jsp?place=Menu07&news_cat_id=330&layout=2&lang=)

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.ohp.pl/ohp/index.jsp?place=Menu07&news\\_cat\\_id=434&layout=1](http://www.ohp.pl/ohp/index.jsp?place=Menu07&news_cat_id=434&layout=1)

<sup>17</sup> *Vocational Counselling in Poland*, [www.praca.gov.pl/tvc/doc/Poradnictwo%20zawodowe%20w%20Polsce.doc](http://www.praca.gov.pl/tvc/doc/Poradnictwo%20zawodowe%20w%20Polsce.doc)

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

#### 4. Educational programmes for individual groups of recipients (methods and programmes)

- *Wyprawka Maturzysty* (a handbook for new secondary-school graduates)

*Wyprawka* is an integral part of the *First Job* programme. It is addressed to new secondary-school graduates as well as tertiary-school students and graduates, but it can also serve as a teaching aid for teachers in entrepreneurship or social studies courses and for class tutors.

The third edition of the handbook is available on the Internet at the official website of the *First Job* programme ([www.1praca.gov.pl/wyprawka.php](http://www.1praca.gov.pl/wyprawka.php)) in the form of PDF files as well as in online version. The form of the handbook has been prepared with the intent to facilitate quick, easy and free-of-charge downloading, printing and reading.

**The handbook *Wyprawka Maturzysty 2005* consists of 8 thematically organised chapters:**

- Chapter A - At the crossroads
- Chapter B - Education
- Chapter C - Looking for a job
- Chapter D - On your own
- Chapter E - The law
- Chapter F - Taxes
- Chapter G - Voluntary service
- Chapter H - The European Union

**Authors of the handbook are experts and specialists, journalists and employees of the following organisations:**

- Departments for: Labour Market, Labour Law, Entrepreneurship Development, European and Multilateral Relations, Regional Development Programmes Implementation, European Social Fund Management, and the Social Communication Office at the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour<sup>19</sup>,
- Public Benefits Department at the Ministry of Social Policy,
- Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (Polska Agencja Rozwoju Przedsiębiorczości),
- National Agency of the YOUTH Programme (Agencja Narodowa Programu "MŁODZIEŻ"),
- Ministry of National Education and Sport<sup>20</sup>,
- Bureaus for Academic Recognition and International Exchange,
- Transparency International Polska.

The first edition of the *Wyprawka Maturzysty* handbook was published in 2003. Encouraged by the very positive reception of the handbook, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour issued the second, extended and updated edition of the handbook on CD<sup>21</sup>.

- Psychological and pedagogic counselling centres use various diagnosis tools: psychological tests, especially those assessing intellectual abilities, personality, interests and special talents, as well as pedagogic tests.

However, there is a notable need to improve the set of test tools the counsellors are equipped with, especially with respect to implementing current standards. An example of such improvement may be the introduction of J. I. Holland's tests purchased by the Ministry

<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Social Policy

<sup>20</sup> Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej i Sportu (MENiS)

<sup>21</sup> [www.1praca.gov.pl/wyprawka.php](http://www.1praca.gov.pl/wyprawka.php)



of National Education: *Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI)* and *Self-Directed Search (SDS)*. It is also necessary to improve the access to information and provide technical equipment (photocopier, computer, video, projector, fax, etc.)

- a) vocational counselling methods aiding in choosing an occupation
  - i. a counselling conversation held according to strictly defined phases together with specialised techniques,
  - ii. "Educational Method" (adopted from France) ,
  - iii. "Courses of Inspiration" (adopted from Denmark).
  - iv. Methods of assessing interests and abilities
  - v. „Balance of Competencies”<sup>22</sup>

These methods are especially useful in helping the long-term unemployed and those at risk of unemployment to define their own occupational situation in the context of the changing needs of the labour market and to develop an individual plan of action.

Ad. i. Counselling conversation

It is the main method used by vocational guidance counsellors at labour offices in serving clients on an individual basis<sup>23</sup>. This method is held according to strictly defined phases together with specialised techniques. During this conversation counsellors obtain the information they need concerning the client's circumstances, the course of his/her education, health conditions, interests and job expectations, which allows the counsellor and client to plan further steps together in accordance with the principle of "realisation counselling". The session ends with the establishment of an action plan for the client.

Ad. ii. "Educational Method"

It places the client's personal experience in the centre of counselling activity, broadens the client's knowledge of the world of occupations, helps to specify his/her occupational situation in the context of the changing needs of the labour market and establishes an individual action plan.

Ad. iii. "Course of Inspiration"

It is an effective method used with the long-term unemployed and those at risk of long-term unemployment. This method enhances the motivation and activeness of unemployed people by building realistic career plans for them.

Ad. iv. Methods of assessing interests and abilities

The methods used to measure interests include the "Self-Directed Search" and "Vocational Preference Inventory" by J. Holland. (The latter is administered by counsellors who hold a degree in psychology.) These tools have been developed by employment offices in the USA. Cultural adaptation of these methods and standardisation of tests have been performed by a team of researchers from Jagiellonian University<sup>24</sup>. The GATB<sup>25</sup>, which is used by employment offices in the USA, is currently being implemented in Polish labour offices. As in the case of the tests developed by J. Holland, the GATB was culturally adapted by a team of researchers from Jagiellonian University. On the basis of the results yielded by this test, it's possible to predict a client's vocational success.

Other psychological tests besides the GATB are used in vocational guidance counselling. Counsellors with a degree in psychology can use other psychometric tools: the APIS-P Test Battery, APIS-Z Test Battery, Anxiety Condition and Characteristics Inventory, the EPQ-R

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<sup>22</sup> Balance of Competencies – A New Tool for Career Planning and Management, <http://www.bkkk-cofund.org.pl/download/publikacja.doc>

<sup>23</sup> G. Weidner, J. Strurm, K. – W. Bauer, *Metodyka poradnictwa zawodowego. Aspekty psychologiczne – wskazówki praktyczne*, Warsaw 1996, p. 9.

<sup>24</sup> Work on the tests has been conducted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy as part of the TOR #8 project of the World Bank

<sup>25</sup> General Aptitude Test Battery

and the Temperament Questionnaire – Formal Behavioural Description to diagnose basic personality traits. These tools make it possible to assess the potential of aptitudes, interests and personality/temperament traits from the standpoint of planning clients' careers and selecting candidates for jobs.

Ad. v. „Balance of Competencies”

In collaboration with French experts, selected counsellors have also learned the "Balance of Competencies" method. This method enables employed people, unemployed people and people seeking jobs to analyse their own work experience and think over the relations they maintain with their occupational milieu. In the course of several hours' work together, counsellor and client determine the client's vocational competencies. With this knowledge, the client then tries to change his/her occupational circumstances.

## **5. Vocational guidance as part of national strategy for education, employment and other projects/initiatives**

(selected projects)

### **5.1. The National Strategy for Employment and Human Resources Development 2000-2006<sup>26</sup>**

This document outlines key objectives of the domestic policy concerning vocational information and counselling. The strategy aims at achieving a higher involvement of the population in the work process by:

- improving the employment rate by means of human resources quality development;
- entrepreneurship development;
- improving the companies and their employees' skills at adapting to the changing market conditions;
- building up the equal opportunities policy on the labour market.

### **5.2. National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance (NRCVG)<sup>27</sup>: A project**

It was established under an agreement between the National Labour Office and the Ministry of National Education, made on 6th July 1999. The tasks related to the NRCVG have been performed by two working groups: one under the Ministry of Education in the National Centre for Support of Vocational Education, and the other in the Methodological Centre for Vocational Information and Guidance of the National Labour Office. The activities of the NRCVG have been partially financed by the European Commission.

The NRCVG supports the educational mobility of the citizens of Europe by collecting, exchanging and granting access to information about vocational education and training opportunities in European countries. It promotes the educational mobility of youth and adults. All the countries of the European Union as well as applicant countries participate in the NRCVG project. The primary task related to the European aspect of vocational guidance is the development of data bases concerning vocational education and training possibilities in Poland and transmitting them to partners in EU countries; the next most important task is to create conditions that will enable Polish vocational guidance counsellors to upgrade their professional qualifications.

<sup>26</sup> Narodowa Strategia Wzrostu Zatrudnienia i Zasobów Ludzkich na lata 2000-2006, <http://www.mgip.gov.pl/NR/rdonlyres/D356F346-49FF-48EF-869A-0A925AC7CB98/0/nswz.zip>

<sup>27</sup> Narodowe Centrum Zasobów Poradnictwa Zawodowego, <http://www.nrcgkoweit.edu.pl/>



### **5.3. Transnational Vocational Guidance**

The project is conducted by the Methodological Centre for Vocational Information and Guidance under the Leonardo da Vinci Programme and is meant (ultimately) to organise post-graduate studies for vocational guidance counsellors. As a result of this project, a European vocational guidance education programme will be developed. The authors of the programme – who will prepare materials for lecturers and a handbook for students – will be academicians representing the following universities: Jagiellonian University (Poland), University and Higher School of Labour Administration of Mannheim (Germany), University of Klagenfurt (Austria) and University of Szeged (Hungary). The project is supported by the labour offices of these countries.

### **5.4. The 50 Plus project: Vocational activation programme for persons over 50 years of age<sup>28</sup>**

The fundamental challenge for its executors is to find, as a result of the *50 PLUS* Programme, new formulas to maintain the vocational activity of numerous people coming close to the age when the natural inability to participate in vocational life sets in.

The strategic objective of the *50 PLUS* programme is to increase the employment rate of people over 50 years of age, while simultaneously maintaining the necessary systems of social protection for those persons whose situation on the labour market is the most difficult.

The *50 PLUS* guidelines include:

- 1) Popularisation of non-discriminatory employment policy among employers towards employees and job applicants over 50;
- 2) Active, pro-employment government policy towards persons having or entitled to obtain the right to pre-retirement benefits as well as earlier retirement, in order to keep this group vocationally active;
- 3) Building up the measures for activation of unemployed persons over 50, which is meant to help as many unemployed persons as possible to find a job or some other sort of gainful employment or participate in active labour market programmes;
- 4) Support for persons over 50 years of age who, due to being dismissed on grounds being on the part of their employer, may soon find themselves in a very difficult vocational situation.

Beneficiaries of the *50 PLUS* programme are persons aged over 50, either unemployed or at risk of becoming dismissed as well as those who, as a result of re-qualification proceedings, have lost the right to fixed social benefits such as pension for temporary incapacity to work. The programme involves primarily persons in the hardest situation on the labour market, i.e.:

- unemployed persons, registered at the labour offices, in particular persons unemployed for a long time;
- persons close to obtaining or already having the right to pre-retirement benefits or earlier retirement;
- employed persons at risk of being dismissed;
- persons losing the right to disablement pensions and rehabilitation benefits.

Realisation of the programme's objectives assumes an annual activation rate of about 50 to 80 thousand persons who are unemployed or receive pre-retirement benefits (including about 10 thousand i.e. 30% of people entitled to pre-retirement benefits every year) as well as reduction of the number of persons being dismissed from their workplaces before they have reached the retirement age.

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<sup>28</sup> Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour, *50 Plus. Program na rzecz zatrudnienia osób powyżej 50 roku życia*, Warsaw 2004.

## 5.5. First Job: A government programme ([www.1praca.gov.pl](http://www.1praca.gov.pl))

The *First Job* programme is an integral part of the government's social-economic program for 2003-2005. The solutions proposed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy are primarily aimed at helping graduates to improve their opportunity to obtain their first occupational experiences and, in the long term, to stimulate economic development and young people's activity. *First Job* is one of the instruments for the implementation of the National Strategy of Employment and Human Resources Development 2000-2006, based upon the European Employment Strategy. According to the European Employment Guidelines 2002 adopted by the Council and the European Parliament, the issue of young people entering the labour market is an area of special concern for Member States. *First Job* covers the following five areas:

- small and medium enterprises,
- self-employment,
- education,
- voluntarism,
- information, vocational guidance and job placement.

## 6. Self-employment as a part of counselling programmes

The self-employment practice has not become popular in Poland yet, neither is it popular in vocational counselling programmes. This results partly from the complicated formal procedure as well as ignorance of the regulations. Ever since the beginning of the 90s, however, the availability of various support forms for founding processes has been on the rise. It covers the following areas:

- Popularisation of knowledge and skills by means of counselling, training and information within the framework of training and counselling institutions.
- Support with the transfer and commercialisation of new technologies within the framework of technology transfer centres.
- Financial support.
- Counselling, technical and office space support at the initial stage of business activity for newly founded businesses at the so called business incubators and technology centres.
- Development of technology parks, business zones, industrial parks – enterprise centres that facilitate mutual support and collaboration.

At the beginning of 2005 507 centres offering various forms of support for self-employment were distinguished. These included counselling, training, financial support, technology transfer, office space for small businesses etc. The centres included 280 training and counselling institutions, 29 technology transfer centres, 76 local loan funds, 57 credit guarantee funds, 53 business incubators, and 12 technology parks<sup>29</sup>.

Where can a young entrepreneur seek support?

- Communal Offices and District Labour Offices (Communal Centres of Information) provide practical and subject-related information.
- Local foundations, associations and agencies working for economic development.
- Chambers of commerce, craftsmen organisations, employers' associations and unions, and other business representation organisations.
- Academic career services
- Government agencies (Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PAED), Agency Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture (ARMA)).

<sup>29</sup> K. B. Matusiak, M. Mażewska, *PIERWSZA PRACA – PIERWSZY BIZNES – vademecum przedsiębiorczości*, Warsaw, 2005, p.90-91.

One should not fail to mention the particular importance of the National SME Services Network (KSU). It is a network of non-profit organisations working together on a voluntary basis and providing counselling services. The KSU mission is to support the growth of small and medium enterprises as a partner and improve their competitiveness both on Polish and European market. There are currently 100 entities registered at the KSU. Registration is voluntary and available to everyone. There are four types of centres developed within the KSU network:

1. **Counselling and Advisory Centres (PKD)** – they provide short, free advice and information in the field of law and administration.
2. **Business Information Network (BIN)** – 22 centres providing specialist information services concerning access to economic information systems, matching partners, information for foreign investors.
3. **Euro Info Centres (EIC)** – 14 centres providing EU-related information, in particular concerning business activity conditions in EU countries, collaboration with companies from other member states, European standards and norms etc.
4. **National Innovation Centres (KSI)** – a network of centres specialised in providing pro-innovation services with regard to technology transfer and commercialisation as well as implementation of innovative undertakings among SMEs<sup>30</sup>.

One of the rare initiatives is the *First Business*<sup>31</sup> programme operating within the framework of the wider *First Job* programme. *First Business* was initiated in July 2005 and is addressed to unemployed people aged under 25 as well as university graduates under 27 years of age who are registered at the labour offices. The main objective of this programme is to provide factual and financial support in taking up business activity as well as promotion of entrepreneurial attitudes among young people. The implementation of this objective involves, among others, district labour offices, academic organisations, and employers' associations. The programme consists of three basic elements, namely:

1. theoretical training
2. practical counselling
3. subsidies and loans for founding one's own business.

The programme includes also developing an appropriate network of counsellors, providing a broader access to financial means, and promoting guarantor and para-banking institutions.

Appropriate labour offices will refer unemployed young people to trainings in theory (80 hours) of the following subjects:

- building creative attitudes;
- assessing and strengthening psychological predispositions;
- legal and financial knowledge about processes leading to founding a business and its subsequent management and development conditions.

After the trainings are completed the future entrepreneurs will be provided with practical counselling or will be referred ultimately by the relevant labour office to a few months' training at a company with a profile in line with the beneficiary's interests.

After both the theoretical and practical training is completed the unemployed young people will be able to avail themselves of financial help. The programme involves three types of such help:

1. a non-repayable subsidy for founding one's own business, provided by labour offices from the Labour Fund (the maximum amount is 12 077.25 PLN);
2. a loan granted by National Household Bank (Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego) within the framework of the *Work for Young People (Praca dla młodych)* programme (from 5 000 to 40 000 PLN);
3. a non-repayable subsidy for founding one's own business granted within the framework of projects which implement the measures 1.2 „Perspectives for youth” and 1.6 “Vocational integration and reintegration of women” of the Sectoral

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 92-93.

<sup>31</sup> [www.1praca.gov.pl/index.php?id=9&tresc=2877](http://www.1praca.gov.pl/index.php?id=9&tresc=2877)

Operational Programme for Human Resources Development, financed from the means of the European Social Fund.

Within the framework of the *First Business* project, a handbook titled *FIRST JOB – FIRST BUSINESS – an entrepreneur's handbook (PIERWSZA PRACA – PIERWSZY BIZNES – vademecum przedsiębiorczości)* has been published. This publication is addressed to young entrepreneurs as well as employees of public employment services and organisations promoting enterprise development. The handbook is of educational nature with regard to founding and managing one's own business. It introduces the subject of individual predispositions that a potential private businessman should have, explains the principles of a small business' operations (planning, marketing, formal and legal aspects, subsidy application procedures, sources of counselling and financial support), and it also presents some examples of the most important documents used in an enterprise of this type<sup>32</sup>.

It is emphasized in the outline of the programme that its purpose is not to replace the *First Job* programme, but to complement it. This programme fills in the area of self-employment and enterprise promotion.

Another initiative that supports entrepreneurs founding their own businesses are Local Enterprise Desks (Lokalne Okienka Przedsiębiorczości). There are more than 500 of them all over Poland and they are located mainly in the communal offices at departments responsible for business activity registration. The purpose of this action is to help entrepreneurs with completing the formalities related to business registration. Local Enterprise Desks are supported by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, which provides them with information materials concerning the operation principles of programmes for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

At a Local Enterprise Desk, apart from obtaining a wide range of information, one can above all register his or her own business. At just this one desk at the communal office businessmen can submit a record application, REGON register entry application, and tax identification number (NIP) assignment or revision application.

After the registration is completed, the communal office forwards the entrepreneur's documents to the statistical office and the tax office specified by the entrepreneur. The communal authorities play a crucial role here as an intermediary between the entrepreneur and other offices and institutions, thereby shortening the way filled with formalities which heretofore the new businessmen had to cope with by themselves. Unfortunately, the activity of the Desks is aimed primarily at rendering factual and practical assistance with the registration (which means that an addressee of this assistance is a person who has already decided to become self-employed); there is no specific training and counselling offer for persons who wish to broaden their knowledge and improve their skills in this respect. The principles of this initiative, however, provide for trainings for the Desk employees, broadening their knowledge of financing for enterprises of this type<sup>33</sup>.

## 7. Associations of vocational counsellors

- Stowarzyszenie Doradców Szkolnych i Zawodowych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (School and Vocational Counsellors Association of the Republic of Poland)  
Biuro Zarządu Głównego (Main Administration Office)  
ul. Dembowskiego 1, 02-784 Warsaw  
[www.sdsiz.irk.pl](http://www.sdsiz.irk.pl)

<sup>32</sup> K. B. Matusiak, M. Mażewska, *PIERWSZA PRACA – PIERWSZY BIZNES – vademecum przedsiębiorczości*, Warszawa, 2005.

<sup>33</sup> [www.1praca.gov.pl/index.php?id=9&trecsc=1775](http://www.1praca.gov.pl/index.php?id=9&trecsc=1775)

- Ogólnopolskie Forum Poradnictwa Zawodowego  
(Polish National Forum for Vocational Guidance)  
[www.irk.pl/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=8](http://www.irk.pl/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=8)

## Summary

Polish system of vocational counselling (career guidance) is characterised by a quite well organised network of Vocational Career Information and Planning Centres. These Centres have a fairly good database which enables quick recording of changes in the labour market. Cooperation between counsellors employed in individual Career Services is satisfactorily efficient and consists primarily of information and experience exchange as well as carrying out trainings. Every year the qualifications of the counselling staff are improving, which makes it possible to develop professional career information system and provide high quality services. Poland's association and subsequent accession to the European Union enabled Polish counsellors to participate in international organisations. International relations have made it possible for Polish institutions to use the latest vocational guidance tools developed in other countries. Efficient technology, implemented successively in such institutions, make it possible to create new occupation descriptions and update vocational characterisations. Employees of Career Services operating in Poland have good relations with employers (updating of job offers, traineeships, presentations at schools and universities), which permits to verify and obtain new information on the labour market.

Observation of feelings among the society indicates that there is a rising awareness of the need to have access to vocational information and guidance as well as the necessity of guidance in order to achieve significant goals in the implementation of labour market programmes.

Despite many positive changes that have taken place in the Polish market of vocational guidance, a lot remains to be done. First of all, there is no sufficient institutional base to develop occupation-related information. There are still not enough trainings for vocational counsellors, which would take into account the specificity of dynamically developing sectors, such as the media sector. Furthermore, there is no effective system of monitoring the changing requirements of employers towards employees and training demand in individual industries. Another problem is the lack of standardisation of counselling services, as no appropriate legal regulations have been introduced yet. Another factor that affects the quality of counselling services significantly is the employee's remuneration, which is still much too low.

From the specialists' viewpoint, Polish vocational counselling system is still regarded as ineffective, and the financial outlay for its functioning as insufficient. Generally, most of the undertakings and projects are implemented thanks to grants from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour within the framework of the *First Job* programme and other initiatives. The private counselling network is still underdeveloped, and so is the information network concerning all sorts of trainings. The existing assistance (both factual and financial) for unemployed persons who wish to start their own business is insufficient. One of the results is that the potential of both young and creative entrepreneurs and persons with work experience is not fully used; they remain unemployed due to too high barriers (financial, formal and factual) to founding one's own company.

Self-employment is one of the more "neglected" areas in Polish vocational guidance. Self-employment – also defined as a one-person business or one-person company – is a situation where a natural person undertakes business activity on his/her own account and at his/her own risk. Such decision is taken by three groups of people:

- 1) people who wish to create a business from scratch and develop it, making a living in this way and deriving vocational satisfaction from it;
- 2) people working as freelancers, who avail themselves of the freedom resulting from self-organised work;



- 3) people who, because of expected economic benefits or under the influence or pressure from their employer, begin or continue their career as employee, working formally within the framework of their own non-agricultural business activity<sup>34</sup>.

Despite its wide popularity, this form of employment is not as widespread in Poland. Neither is it popular among graduates and the unemployed. In case of unemployed persons, the low interest in this form is often caused by lack of suitable qualifications, or the so called "acquired helplessness", a widespread phenomenon in this group of job seekers. Generally, it seems that the "jump" from unemployment to self-employment is too big for most unemployed people to make (both from the psychological and organisational aspect). Also with regard to graduates it cannot be said that self-employment is a widely popular concept. It is still regarded as an emergency strategy, whereas permanent contract-based jobs are preferred<sup>35</sup>.

It appears that Polish vocational guidance is not able to answer the questions posed by unemployed people wishing to found their own business as yet. When we seek specific assistance (trainings, competency tests etc.) at the labour offices, all we find is the financial offer (subsidies, co-funding of paid trainings), which cannot be used efficiently by unprepared persons.

It follows clearly that Polish vocational counselling still has a long way to go before it meets the expectations of its primary recipient: an unemployed person awaiting mostly factual support and activation, so as not to lose in the continuous race for a job.

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<sup>34</sup> [www.samozastrudnienie.pit.pl](http://www.samozastrudnienie.pit.pl)

<sup>35</sup> *Samozastrudnienie. Analiza wyników badań*, ed. R. Drozdowski, P. Matczak, Warszawa 2004, p. 98-99.

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## **II. STATE OF THE ART IN FINLAND**

### **1. Definition of career counseling/ career counselor in Finland**

In Finland the goal of the guidance and counseling services is to help individuals make choices concerning their education, training and career planning at different stages of their lives. All citizens have a chance of receiving guidance and counseling whether they are students, at work, unemployed or outside the labour market. (Ministry of Labour et al. 2003)

Finland is implementing lifelong learning strategies, as well as policies to encourage the development of the citizens' employability. Career guidance and counseling is seen as having a key role in implementing these strategies and policies. (OECD 2004).

### **2. Legislation concerning career counseling**

Legislation is the main instrument for steering the guidance services in Finland. Its role is very important since it guarantees both the provision of guidance services within the labour administration and the main co-operation activities with other public agencies and service providers. The legislation also establishes the main guidelines for guidance services, the rights of clients regarding access to services and the more precise demands on the administration concerning the provision of providing these services. (Kasurinen & Vuorinen 2002)

The Basic Education Act states that every pupil must be provided with adequate counseling services. Counseling services in vocational schools and upper secondary general education are similarly prescribed by law. The legislation on labour market services and the Employment Services Decree provide detailed instructions concerning the purposes and principles underpinning the information, guidance and counseling services offered by the employment offices. (Kasurinen & Vuorinen 2002)

### **3. Types of institutions/organizations involved in career counseling and guidance services**

The role of public sector is significant in the field of career counseling in Finland. Education and labour authorities have the main responsibility for the organization of guidance and counseling services in the public sector. Educational institutions have the main responsibility for counseling of pupils and students. The career services of employment offices are primarily intended for those outside the education and training system. Employment offices offer services also to employers. (Ministry of Labour et al. 2003)

However, in addition to the extensive public services there are also available services offered by private and third sector. Employers are the most important group utilizing private services. Different kind of special groups utilize the services of third sector.

The following table ( Table 1) includes information about the different organisations involved in career counseling and guidance services in Finland. It includes information about the sector, location, number, curricula, content of counseling counseling and target groups of the career counseling and guidance organisations.

**Table 1 Counseling and guidance organizations in Finland**

Organisation	Sector	Location	N	Curricula	Counseling/Guidance	Target groups
Comprehensive schools	Public	All over the country	3570	Goals for guidance and counseling for forms 1-2, 3-6, and 7-9	Covers study skills, self-knowledge, further education and training options, occupations, working life	Pupils (7-16 years old)
Upper secondary schools	Public	All over the country	430	Includes one compulsory and one specialisation course (optional) devoted to guidance each consisting of 38 hrs	Covers learning techniques, self-knowledge, issues related to career choice, planning for the future, studies at other educational institutes	Pupils (over 16 years old)
Vocational schools	Public	All over the country	196		Provides students with individual support in studies, career planning and employment as well as in further education	Pupils (over 16 years old)
Poly-technics	Public	All over the country	29		Comprehensive guidance and counseling system (e.g. planning of studies, international exchange opportunities, student financial aid issues), career services and information about careers, recruitment and job exchange	Students and employers
Universities	Public	All over the country	20		General student counseling, special office for student guidance (information about studies, practical training, open university courses), career and recruitment services	Students and employers
Employment offices	Public	All over the country	147		Vocational guidance and career planning, educational and vocational information services, employment exchange services	Young and adult clients and employers
CIMO	Public	Hel-sinki	1		Euroguidance Finland	Guidance counselors in education and employment sectors dealing with studying and training opportunities abroad

Consl-tancy companies	Priva-te	All over the count-ry			Recruitment services, outplacement and career counseling	Employers, special groups (e.g. returning expatriates and “rising stars”)
Trade organisa-tions and associa-tions	Third sector	All over the count-ry			Career and recruitment services	Special groups (e.g. special occu-pational groups, disabled)

#### **4. Training program for special groups:**

##### **4.1. Counseling concerning educational paths**

In Finland educational institutions have an important role in counseling concerning educational paths. The counseling includes, for example (Ministry of Labour et al. 2003):

1. information about further education and training options
2. personal and small group guidance
3. training to use different tools to search for information about education and training
4. information about the guidance and counseling services provided by society
5. help in selecting relevant courses
6. tutoring and web-tutoring
7. websites including links about education and training

The most important methods used in employment offices in educational paths counseling are (Ministry of Labour 2005):

8. personal guidance in questions relating to education and training, also by phone and e-mail
9. psychological tests
10. information about studying abroad
11. publications, guidebooks, brochures and videos about educational and training institutions and study programmes
12. websites including information about education and training

In Finland, there has been developed a lot web-based services in the guidance and counseling sector. Internet is used primarily to provide information about education and training and occupations. National and local portals facilitate search for information from extensive information sources and databases. In addition of education and training providers and labour authorities there are many other providers of web-based guidance and counseling services. For example, the website of the National Board of Education provides basic information, different handbooks and search facilities about education and training. The National Board of Education is also developing a comprehensive database about education and training provision for guidance and counseling personnel working in education and labour administration. On the website of the Ministry of Education there are information about post-compulsory education and training (web service “Opintoluotsi”) and web-based services to support guidance and counseling professionals in their daily works and to help them maintain their skills up-to-date (web service “Asiantuntijaluotsi”). Information about financial aid to students can be found on the website of the Finnish Social Insurance Institution. (Ministry of Labour et al. 2003)

## **4.2. Counseling concerning occupation selection**

The methods used in educational institutions in counseling concerning occupational selection are diverse. They are, for example (Ministry of Labour et al. 2003):

1. self-knowledge exercises
2. information about occupations, occupational sectors and working life
3. training to use different tools to search for information occupations
4. information about the guidance and counseling services provided by society
5. personal and small group guidance
6. work experiences
7. visits to working places

The most important methods used in employment offices in counseling concerning occupation selection are (Ministry of Labour 2005):

1. personal guidance in questions relating to occupations and working life
2. personal and group counseling
3. psychological tests
4. other tests and methods to determine, for instance, the client's health and ability to work
5. publications, guidebooks, brochures and videos about occupations
6. website including information about occupations and careers (e.g. career choice programme AVO for young people, and a guidance programme AURA for adults)

Labour market training opportunities include special career guidance training to help young people or adults in a transition period in their lives to identify the options available for them. The training consists of personal and group counseling, independent information search and a period of practical training. During the training participants draw up a plan for their vocational development. Career guidance training is provided by, for example, vocational adult education centres and it can be applied for through employment offices. (Ministry of Labour et al. 2003)

One example of the private sector ICT-based career services is website called Oikotie. In 1999 Helsingin Sanomat, the newspaper with the widest circulation in Finland, made career services available to all citizens in the Internet. The newspaper's website Oikotie offers a multitude of career planning and job search tools and services. All services, including online self-assessment exercises, e-mail guidance, a Curriculum Vitae Wizard, and an option to forward applications to employers online, are free of charge. (OECD 2004)

## **4.3. Counseling concerning work recruitment**

In Finland recruitment counseling services are provided by, for example, universities, employment offices, private companies and third sector associations. The counseling services of different providers have one common element. Service providers often offer jobseekers and employers a meeting forum. From the point of view of the jobseekers the meeting forum acts as a link to the open vacancies and from the employers' point of view the same forum serves as a way to find out new employees. The systems and databases are often in the Internet. They include announcements of the open vacancies and CV-applications of the jobseekers.

In addition the meeting forum the recruitment counseling services of employment offices include, for example:

- Hiring out of personnel services for fixed-term duties
- Possibility to get financial aid for employing an unemployed employee. The forms of aid include employment subsidy, combined subsidy and support for arrangement of working conditions.

- Labour market training implemented as a joint purchase of the employer and the labour administration
- Counseling and help in matters related to employer obligations and employment relationships. (Ministry of Labour 2005)

In addition to the meeting forum the recruitment counseling services of private companies include, for example:

- candidate search (head hunting and public) and screening
- psychological testing and interviewing
- selection recommendations

#### **4.4. Counseling concerning retraining**

The counseling of employment offices concerning retraining includes, for example, the following methods:

- personal guidance and counseling
- medical examinations and aptitude testing as well
- expert consultations
- work and training try-outs
- labour market training

#### **4.5. Career counseling as a part of national strategy for education, employment and other projects/initiatives**

In Finland the need for career counseling has considerably increased during the last fifteen years. There has been many factors affecting to this progression. For example, changes in the education and employment policy have raised the optionality in the studies. People in the university sector have paid attention to the guidance and counseling from the point of view of prolongation of the student years. At the same time changes in the financing system of universities have increased the pressure to shorten student years. (Vuorinen 2004)

Today the role of career counseling is essential part of national strategy for education and employment in Finland. In the education and employment policy the significance of guidance and counseling has been emphasized especially from the point of view of prevention of exclusion and social equality (Vuorinen 2004). The single biggest education-related influence shaping the national policies that underpin information, guidance and counseling services in Finland is the adoption of policy of lifelong learning (Kasurinen & Vuorinen 2002).

### **5. Existence of Entrepreneurship (self-employment) element in career counseling programs**

The increase in entrepreneurship and self-employment activity has been seen essential for the Finnish society. Thus, it is natural that entrepreneurship is one important element in career counseling in Finland.

According to the Finnish Government Programme, measures will be taken to promote entrepreneurship at different levels of education, to enhance the attractiveness of entrepreneurship as a career, to take account of the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises in education policy projects, to develop advisory services geared to entrepreneurs who hire employees and to improve business owners' opportunities for apprenticeship training. (Ministry of Education 2004)

The Development Plan for Education and Research 2003-2008 notes that maintaining the level of welfare society services in Finland entails new business. Entrepreneurship education integrated into the education system and a mindset favourable to entrepreneurship create a basis for entrepreneurship. Interaction between education and the world of work will be promoted, the knowledge of teachers and guidance counsellors about entrepreneurship will be enhanced and teaching content and methods will be developed in all education and training. (Ministry of Education 2004)

In the Ministry of Education sector, the aims set for entrepreneurship education and training relate to

- 1) the creation of an entrepreneurship culture and a mindset and climate conducive to entrepreneurship;
- 2) the promotion of internal and external entrepreneurship, the creation of new business, and innovation; and
- 3) support to entrepreneurs and their businesses and to generation changes in businesses.

The first and second aims concern all pupils and students in the education system. The aim is that schools, together with other stakeholders, raise the awareness of pupils and students of the significance and potential of entrepreneurship. At the same time, measures are taken to enable students to get hands-on experience of setting up and running a business, to enhance the competence of teachers and to promote external experts' contribution to teaching. The third aim concerns especially the development of vocationally and professionally oriented education with a view of enhancing the professional skills of entrepreneurs and business development and supporting generation changes in businesses. (Ministry of Education 2004)

The following are examples of the existence of entrepreneurship element in the career counseling of labour authorities in Finland.

- Public advisory and consultancy services for people considering entrepreneurship as their career option.
- The labour administration organises training for prospective entrepreneurs as labour market training.
- On certain conditions, employment offices may provide grants for business start-ups. The purpose of a start-up grant is to help secure the entrepreneur's subsistence for the period they are estimated to require for starting up their business and becoming established.
- Financial aid for independent initiative may be granted by the Labour Force Departments of the Employment and Economic Development Centres to support cooperatives established by unemployed persons. The aid is intended to cover certain costs arising from cooperative start-ups that create jobs or employment opportunities for unemployed persons. (The Ministry of Labour 2005)

## **6. Associations gathering career counselors**

The main mechanisms for co-ordinating guidance services have been developed between the labour and educational authorities at central, regional and local level. The mechanisms on which co-operation between labour and educational authorities is based and the scope of their co-operation vary locally and regionally. At local level it can involve employment officials and school student counselors agreeing on co-operation and how to go about it. Often both schools and employment offices appoint contact persons to coordinate not only guidance co-operation but also co-operation in the field between guidance and recruitment services. (Kasurinen & Vuorinen 2002)



Using the educational and vocational information services of employment offices in student counselling at schools is an important form of co-operation. Educational advisors make arrangements with local student counsellors for distributing information materials and organizing information sessions at schools and for sending students on study visits to employment offices. The career service centres of vocational schools and polytechnics are an important link between schools and employment offices helping school leavers and graduates to enter the labour market. The main responsibility for these activities falls on schools, but employment offices also play a role in this co-operation. There is similar co-operation between career service centres of universities and employment offices. (Kasurinen & Vuorinen 2002)

At national level, the issues concerning co-operation between student counseling services for young people and employment services are dealt with in a special working group for school co-operation established by the Ministry of Labour. When needed it makes educational and labour authorities proposals about organization of guidance and counseling services for young people, about issues concerning education, training and the employment of young people in general, and about the development of information materials on education, training and working life to support guidance and counseling activities. In some regions there are regional working groups of the same type focusing on guidance co-operation between regional educational and labour authorities. (Kasurinen & Vuorinen 2002)

The Finnish Association of Student Counsellors is cooperating with 40 different stakeholders. The most important partners are the Ministry of Education, the national Board of Education, the Ministry of Labour, counsellor training units, student organizations, and trade unions. Co-operation methods vary from one locality and region to another, but networking opportunities have been created. (Kasurinen & Vuorinen 2002)

CIMO promotes the internationalization of the Finnish society, with education and training, work and young people as its special focus. CIMO belongs to the Euroguidance network operating in the EU, EEA and CEE countries. In addition, CIMO co-operates closely with both the Ministries of Education and Labour. (Kasurinen & Vuorinen 2002)

## References

- Kasurinen, Helena – Vuorinen, Raimo (2002) *OECD Review of career Guidance Policies. Finland – National Questionnaire*. Publications of OECD.
- Ministry of Education (2004) *Yrittäjyyskasvatuksen linjaukset ja toimenpideohjelma*. Ministry of Education, Publications of the Department for Education and Science Policy 2004:18.
- Ministry of Labour – Ministry of Education – National Board of Education – CIMO (2003) *Guidance: Educational and vocational guidance in Finland*. 8/03, Helsinki.
- Ministry of Labour (2005) Web-pages of the Ministry of Labour. <http://www.mol.fi/>, read 20<sup>th</sup> of September 2005.
- OECD (2004) *Career Guidance – A Handbook for Policy Makers*. Publications of OECD/European Communities.
- Vuorinen, Raimo (2004) Uraohjauksen toimintapolitiikka, organisointi ja palvelujärjestelmä. In *OECD:n teema- ja maatutkinnat – Ylikansallista ohjausta vai kansallista itseymmärrystä*, Ed. Reijo Laukkanen. Ministry of Education, Publications of the Department for Education and Science Policy, p. 32-42.



### **III. STATE OF THE ART IN AUSTRIA**

#### **1. Definition of career counseling/ career counselor in Austria**

As in Austria there is no legal regulation governing the professional qualifications of educational and vocational counselors, career counseling as well as career counselors are characterised in the following, by describing the fields where career counseling and guidance services take place.

In general career counseling is asked to respond to all the pathways that young people are provided with through education to working life and afterwards through their lifelong professional or academic career. In Austria, choices for education must be made at an early age and the several pathways are highly differentiated due to different school types. Those choices on education that young people in Austria have to make in school, have major implications for later work and study options.

Guidance services between education and labour market portfolios in Austria are also very fragmented and they do not constitute an integrated system.

According to the OECD reports on career counselling in Austria, the existence of many data bases on course information must be seen as a duplication of effort and resources, and the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture should play a stronger role in producing a single co-ordinated course guide.

As a main actor in the labour market, the Austrian Public Employment Office (AMS) is organised on an integrated three-tier model of service delivery in information on self-service, personal advice and intensive career counselling (please see more under 3. D) Public employment service AMS).

In general career counseling can be seen as a broad field of actors from professional consultants to – in a certain way – parents, friends and colleagues as well. The branch of professional coaches i.e. can also be in touch with matters of career development. Besides there are many non personal ways of information about possible career developments provided by specialized editors in newspapers, magazines, books etc.

Returning to the professional actors in career counselling, recent reports of the OEDC state that in general, systematic approaches to quality development and quality assurance seem to be under-developed in Austria and must be regarded as an area for further development.

It is still a matter of fact in Austria, that there exists no common standard or requirements of an education for those persons (career counsellors) whose job it is to bring others in suited education and jobs.

#### **2. Legislation concerning career counselling**

In Austria no legal regulation governing the professional qualifications of educational and vocational counsellors exist so far. Summarized, the OECD report "Review of policies for career information, guidance and counselling services" (March 2002) rates the professionalism of educational and vocational counselling in Austria as relatively low and of especially low quality in the field of adult counselling.

However, schools in Austria are required to provide career lessons to all students in grades 7 and 8. This is a strength of the Austrian system, particularly when compared to other

countries in which career assistance is not mandated, though the actual quality of the integrated, cross-subject implementation is uncertain.

### **3. Types of institutions/organizations involved in career counseling and guidance services (355 locations)**

Regarding the number of career guidance practitioners, it isn't possible to find appropriate data, because mostly those services are not provided full-time but combined with other tasks of these practitioners. According to the OECD report "Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap" (2004) it is estimated that in Austria roughly 47% of all practitioners are in schools, 39% in the public employment service (AMS), 9% in adult education and 4% in the field of universities and applied universities.

Looking at institutions involved in career counselling and guidance services, the following 355 locations of career counselling and guidance services are based on information given at the platform "Bildungsberater im Netz (Career Counselors online)" which is supported by the ESF and the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture (<http://www.bib-infonet.at>). This information source is also recommended by Euroguidance at the Austrian national agency of Leonardo da Vinci.

As you will find more about it below, at the stage of **A) career counseling in general**, 46 organisations are listed. **B) Career information and counseling about education offerings**, 48 organisations are named. Another group of institutions and organisations is provided in **C) target group orientated career counseling** with 127 addresses. Career counseling and guidance services provided by **D) public employment service (AMS)** is shown with 110 locations. 7 organisations in the **E) the field of research about career and education and co-ordination** are followed by **F) private organisations** in the field of education and career with 17 institutions.

The Austrian organisations involved in career counselling and guidance services are named together with their location(s) and as far as possible supplemented by **internet links** to allow further information about their structure, recent offerings and curricula.

#### **3.1. Career counseling in general (46 locations)**

Career counselling in general is mostly provided by special units of AK Arbeiterkammer (chamber of work): 20 locations, Wirtschaftskammer WK (chamber of commerce) including WIFI, a training institutions of WK: 10 locations as well as by several other organisations and associations: 16 locations. The offerings of career counselling in general – as well as career counselling and guidance in the other fields from B) to F) are broadly spread around all counties and regions of Austria.

AHA!-Bildungsberatung  
5027 Salzburg  
[www.sbg.wk.or.at/AHA](http://www.sbg.wk.or.at/AHA)

AK Kärnten  
9020 Klagenfurt

AK Niederösterreich Bildungsinformation  
1060 Vienna  
[www.noe.arbeiterkammer.at](http://www.noe.arbeiterkammer.at)

AK Steiermark Bildungsabteilung  
8020 Graz  
[www.akstmk.at](http://www.akstmk.at)

AK Tirol, Bildungspolitische Abteilung  
6010 Innsbruck  
[www.ak-tirol.com](http://www.ak-tirol.com)

AK Vienna Bildungsberatung  
1040 Vienna  
[www.akbildungsberatung.at](http://www.akbildungsberatung.at)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Braunau  
5280 Braunau  
[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Eferding  
4070 Eferding  
[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Freistadt  
4240 Freistadt  
[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Gmunden  
4810 Gmunden  
[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Grieskirchen  
4710 Grieskirchen  
[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)  
AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Kirchdorf  
4560 Kirchdorf  
[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Perg  
4320 Perg  
[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Ried  
4910 Ried  
[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Rohrbach  
4150 Rohrbach  
[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Schärding  
4780 Schärding  
[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Steyr  
4400 Steyr  
[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Vöcklabruck  
4840 Vöcklabruck

[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ - Bezirksstelle Wels  
4600 Wels  
[www.arbeiterkammer.com](http://www.arbeiterkammer.com)

AK-Bildungsberatung in OÖ  
4020 Linz  
[www.bildungsberatung.com](http://www.bildungsberatung.com)

BIBER Bildungsberatung für Erwachsene Bischofshofen  
5500 Bischofshofen  
[www.eb.salzburg.at/biber.htm](http://www.eb.salzburg.at/biber.htm)

BIBER Bildungsberatung für Erwachsene Saalfelden  
5760 Saalfelden  
[www.eb.salzburg.at/biber.htm](http://www.eb.salzburg.at/biber.htm)

BIBER Bildungsberatung für Erwachsene Salzburg  
5020 Salzburg  
[www.eb.salzburg.at/biber.htm](http://www.eb.salzburg.at/biber.htm)

BIBER Bildungsberatung für Erwachsene Tamsweg  
5580 Tamsweg  
[www.eb.salzburg.at/biber.htm](http://www.eb.salzburg.at/biber.htm)

BIFO Berufs- und Bildungs-Information Vorarlberg, gemeinnützige Ges.m.b.H.  
6850 Dornbirn  
[www.vol.at/bifo](http://www.vol.at/bifo)

BIWI Berufsinformation der Viennaer Wirtschaft  
1180 Vienna  
[www.biwi.at/home.htm](http://www.biwi.at/home.htm)

Berufs-Bildungs-Center der AK  
6800 Feldkirch

Berufs-Informations-Zentrum der Wirtschaftskammer Tirol  
6020 Innsbruck  
[www.wko.at/tirol/biz](http://www.wko.at/tirol/biz)

Bildungsberatung Burgenland  
7000 Eisenstadt  
[www.bildungsberatung-burgenland.at](http://www.bildungsberatung-burgenland.at)

Bildungsberatung WIFI-Vienna  
1180 Vienna  
[bibernet.wifiVienna.at](http://bibernet.wifiVienna.at)

Bildungsnetzwerk Steiermark, Regionalbüro Murau  
8850 Murau  
[www.eb-stmk.at/bildungsservice](http://www.eb-stmk.at/bildungsservice)

Bildungsnetzwerk Steiermark  
8020 Graz  
[www.bildungsnetzwerk-stmk.at](http://www.bildungsnetzwerk-stmk.at)

GPA Gewerkschaft der Privatangestellten Kursreferat 'Weißer Rabe'  
1010 Vienna

OEGB Steiermark Bildungsreferat  
8020 Graz

Servicestelle für Erwachsenenbildung des Landes OÖ  
4021 Linz  
[www.land-oberoesterreich.gv.at](http://www.land-oberoesterreich.gv.at)

Test- und Beratungsstelle des Arbeitsbereichs Psychologische Diagnostik, Institut für  
Psychologie, Universität Vienna  
1010 Vienna  
[www.testzentrum.at](http://www.testzentrum.at)

Verband Österreichischer Gewerkschaftlicher Bildung  
7400 Oberwart  
[www.voegb.at](http://www.voegb.at)

Verein Lichtblick  
2700 Viennaer Neustadt

Verein Miteinander Lernen  
1160 Vienna

WIFI Burgenland - Berufsinformation & Bildungsberatungsservice  
7000 Eisenstadt  
[www.wko.at/bgld](http://www.wko.at/bgld)

WIFI Innsbruck  
6020 Innsbruck

WIFI Tirol Bildungsberatung  
6020 Innsbruck  
[www.tirol.wifi.at](http://www.tirol.wifi.at)

WIFI-BIZ Gmünd  
3950 Gmünd

WIFI-BIZ St. Pölten  
3100 St. Pölten  
[www.noewifi.at](http://www.noewifi.at)

WIFI-BIZ Viennaer Neustadt  
2700 Viennaer Neustadt

Wirtschaftskammer OÖ - Karriereberatung  
4024 Linz  
[wko.at/ooe/karriere](http://wko.at/ooe/karriere)

### **3.2. Career information and counseling about education offerings (48 locations)**

In the field of career information and counselling about education offerings, the main players in Austria with 14 locations are bfi vocational training institute, an association of the chamber

of workers and the Austrian labour union as well as VHS (adult education centres) – often in co-operation with the chamber of workers with a number of 26 locations (plus 1 institution organized as a telephone hotline). Another 7 organisations are involved in this field of information.

BFI - Bildungszentrum Leoben  
8700 Leoben  
[www.bfi-stmk.at](http://www.bfi-stmk.at)

BFI Burgenland (Zentralstelle)  
7400 Oberwart  
[www.bfi-burgenland.at](http://www.bfi-burgenland.at)

BFI Kärnten  
9020 Klagenfurt

BFI Niederösterreich  
2700 Viennaer Neustadt  
[www.bfi-noe.at](http://www.bfi-noe.at)

BFI NÖ Amstetten  
3300 Amstetten

BFI NÖ Gmünd  
3950 Gmünd  
[www.bfi-noe.or.at](http://www.bfi-noe.or.at)

BFI NÖ Industrieviertel  
2700 Viennaer Neustadt

BFI NÖ St. Pölten  
3100 St. Pölten

BFI NÖ Weinviertel  
1060 Vienna

BFI Salzburg  
5020 Salzburg

BFI Steiermark  
8020 Graz  
[www.bfi-stmk.at](http://www.bfi-stmk.at)

BFI Tirol  
6010 Innsbruck  
[www.bfi-tirol.at](http://www.bfi-tirol.at)

BFI Vienna-Bildungsberatung  
1120 Vienna  
[www.bfi-Vienna.at](http://www.bfi-Vienna.at)

Bildungs-Center der AK Vorarlberg  
6800 Feldkirch  
[www.bbc.at](http://www.bbc.at)

Bildungsberatung polycollege



1050 Vienna  
[www.polycollege.ac.at](http://www.polycollege.ac.at)

Bildungstelefon der Viennese Volkshochschulen  
1150 Vienna  
[www.vhs.at](http://www.vhs.at)

ISBP - Institut für Sozial- und Berufspädagogik am BFI Steiermark  
8020 Graz  
[www.bfi-stmk.or.at](http://www.bfi-stmk.or.at)

ISSAK-VHS, Geschäftsstelle Voitsberg  
8570 Voitsberg  
[www.vhsstmk.at](http://www.vhsstmk.at)

Landesverband Burgenländischer Volkshochschulen  
7000 Eisenstadt  
[www.vhs-burgenland.at](http://www.vhs-burgenland.at)

Oesterreichische Urania für Steiermark  
8010 Graz  
[www.urania.at](http://www.urania.at)

Polycollege Stöbergasse  
1050 Vienna  
[www.polycollege.ac.at](http://www.polycollege.ac.at)

VHS - ISSAK Leibnitz  
8430 Leibnitz  
[www.vhsstmk.at](http://www.vhsstmk.at)

VHS Burgenland, Regionalstelle Nord  
7131 Halbturn  
[www.vhs-burgenland.at](http://www.vhs-burgenland.at)

VHS Burgenland, Regionalstelle Süd  
7400 Oberwart  
[www.vhs-burgenland.at](http://www.vhs-burgenland.at)

VHS Favoriten  
1100 Vienna  
[www.vhs.at/favoriten](http://www.vhs.at/favoriten)

VHS Floridsdorf - Zweiter Bildungsweg  
1210 Vienna  
[www.vhs21.ac.at/2.bw](http://www.vhs21.ac.at/2.bw)

VHS Innsbruck  
6020 Innsbruck  
[www.vhs-tirol.at](http://www.vhs-tirol.at)

VHS Judenburg  
8750 Judenburg

VHS Leoben  
8701 Leoben

VHS Linz  
4020 Linz  
[www.linz.at/VHS](http://www.linz.at/VHS)

VHS Meidling  
1120 Vienna  
[www.vhs.at/meidling](http://www.vhs.at/meidling)

VHS Ottakring - Sprachenzentrum & 2. Bildungsweg  
1160 Vienna  
[www.vhs.at/ottakring](http://www.vhs.at/ottakring)

VHS Salzburg  
5020 Salzburg

VHS Urania  
1010 Vienna

VHS-AK Bruck/Mur  
8600 Bruck/Mur

VHS-AK Deutschlandsberg  
8530 Deutschlandsberg

VHS-AK Feldbach  
8330 Feldbach

VHS-AK Fürstenfeld  
8280 Fürstenfeld

VHS-AK Hartberg  
8230 Hartberg

VHS-AK Knittelfeld  
8720 Knittelfeld

VHS-AK Liezen  
8910 Liezen

VHS-AK Murau  
8850 Murau

VHS-AK Mürzzuschlag  
8680 Mürzzuschlag

VHS-AK Traun  
4050 Traun

VHS-AK Weiz  
8160 Weiz

Volksbildungswerk für das Burgenland, Regionalstelle Nord  
7131 Halbturn

Volksbildungswerk für das Burgenland, Regionalstelle Süd  
7400 Oberwart  
[www.volksbildungswerk-bgld.at](http://www.volksbildungswerk-bgld.at)

Volksbildungswerk für das Burgenland  
7000 Eisenstadt

Weiterbildungsinformation des WAFF  
1020 Vienna  
[www.weiterbildung.at](http://www.weiterbildung.at)

Zentrum für Weiterbildung, Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz  
8010 Graz  
[www.uni-graz.at/weiterbildung](http://www.uni-graz.at/weiterbildung)

### **3.3. Target group orientated career counseling (127 locations)**

Target group orientated career counselling plays the most important role in the field of career counselling and guidance services in Austria. Altogether 127 institutions and initiatives are working together with different target groups in a wide range from pupils and students to unemployed persons over 40 years, immigrants or handicapped persons. Alone in the field of targeting women as employees, 50 institutions are organised. The field of target group orientated career counselling is dominated by non profit organisations, often in a very small and local manner.

ABZ. Austria Arbeit Bildung Zukunft Chancen für Frauen - Chancen der Wirtschaft  
1080 Vienna  
[www.abzaustria.at](http://www.abzaustria.at)

Abteilung Schulpsychologie-Bildungsberatung im BMBWK  
1010 Vienna  
[www.schulpsychologie.at](http://www.schulpsychologie.at)

Akzente Salzburg - Jugendinfo  
5020 Salzburg  
[www.akzente.net](http://www.akzente.net)

Alternative - Zentrum für Ausbildungsmanagement für Frauen und Betriebe  
8200 Gleisdorf  
[www.alternative.or.at](http://www.alternative.or.at)

Amandas Matz / waff  
1020 Vienna  
[www.waff.at](http://www.waff.at)

BBRZ Kärnten  
9020 Klagenfurt  
[www.bfi-bbrz.at](http://www.bfi-bbrz.at)

BBRZ Linz  
4020 Linz  
[www.bbrz.at](http://www.bbrz.at)

BBRZ Steiermark  
8605 Kapfenberg  
[www.bfi-bbrz.at](http://www.bfi-bbrz.at)

BBRZ Vienna  
1110 Vienna  
[www.bfi-bbrz.at](http://www.bfi-bbrz.at)

Beratungsstelle für berufliche Entwicklungschancen / waff  
1020 Vienna  
[www.waff.at](http://www.waff.at)

Beratungszentrum der ÖH - Uni Salzburg  
5010 Salzburg  
[www.oeh.sbg.ac.at/neu/beratung/beratung\\_zentrum.htm](http://www.oeh.sbg.ac.at/neu/beratung/beratung_zentrum.htm)

Choice - VFQ Frauenweiterbildungsprogramme  
4020 Linz  
[www.vfq.at/vfq](http://www.vfq.at/vfq)

Danaida - Bildung und Treffpunkt für ausländische Frauen  
8020 Graz

Der Würfel Myrthengasse - Beratungscafé für Arbeitslose  
1070 Vienna

Die Berater - Management Consulting, Coaching und Trainings  
1010 Vienna  
[www.die-berater.com](http://www.die-berater.com)

FRECH - Frauen ergreifen Chancen / waff  
1020 Vienna  
[www.waff.at](http://www.waff.at)

Frau und Arbeit, Frauenberatung Mostviertel  
3300 Amstetten

Frauen Aktiv, Zentrum Erdberg  
1030 Vienna

Frauen Beratung Bürmoos  
5111 Bürmoos

Frauen beraten Frauen Vienna, Institut für frauenspezifische Sozialforschung  
1060 Vienna

Frauen für Frauen Murau  
8850 Murau

Frauen- und Familienberatung 'Der Lichtblick'  
7100 Neusiedl/See

Frauen- und Familienberatung Vöcklabruck  
4840 Vöcklabruck

Frauen-Mädchen-Familienberatungsstelle Oberwart  
7400 Oberwart

FrauenManagement - Genossenschaft  
7000 Eisenstadt

Frauenakademie Pascalina - Bildung und Beratung  
2000 Stockerau  
[www.pascalina.at](http://www.pascalina.at)

Frauenberatung Oberpullendorf  
7350 Oberpullendorf

Frauenberatung Zwettl  
3910 Zwettl  
[www.frauenberatung.zwettl.at](http://www.frauenberatung.zwettl.at)

Frauenberatungs- und Bildungszentrum / Verein Frauen für Frauen  
2020 Hollabrunn

Frauenberatungsstelle "Koryphäen"  
7100 Neusiedl/See

Frauenberatungsstelle Freiraum  
2620 Neunkirchen  
[www.frauenberatung-freiraum.at](http://www.frauenberatung-freiraum.at)

Frauenberatungsstelle Güssing  
7540 Güssing

Frauenberatungsstelle Inneres Salzkammergut  
4820 Bad Ischl

Frauenberatungsstelle Jennersdorf  
8380 Jennersdorf  
Frauenberatungsstelle UNDINE  
2500 Baden

Frauenforum Gänserndorf  
2230 Gänserndorf

Frauengetriebe - Bildungszentrum für Frauen  
6900 Bregenz  
[www.3laenderfrauen.org/Organisationen/Frauengetriebe.htm](http://www.3laenderfrauen.org/Organisationen/Frauengetriebe.htm)

Fraueninformationszentrum Vorarlberg e.V. FEMAIL  
6800 Feldkirch  
[www.femail.at](http://www.femail.at)

Frauenservicestelle  
7000 Eisenstadt

Frauenservicestelle die Tür Mattersburg  
7210 Mattersburg

Frauenstiftung Steyr - Verein Frauenarbeit  
4400 Steyr  
[www.frauenstiftung.at](http://www.frauenstiftung.at)

Frauentreff Rohrbach  
4150 Rohrbach

Freiberuflicher Berater, Mag. Dr. Robert Schlarb  
2721 Bad Fischau

Freiberuflicher Bildungs- und Karriereberater, Mag. Peter Laher

9585 Gödersdorf

GATE - Verein Multikulturell  
6020 Innsbruck  
[www.migration.cc](http://www.migration.cc)

Hebebühne Purkersdorf  
3002 Purkersdorf  
[www.hebebuehne.at](http://www.hebebuehne.at)

Hebebühne Tulln  
3430 Tulln

Hilfswerk Akademie  
5020 Salzburg  
[www.salzburger.hilfswerk.at](http://www.salzburger.hilfswerk.at)

IBZ Informations- und Beratungszentrum für Arbeitslose des BFI  
1120 Vienna  
INITIATIVE 40 - Beratungsstelle f. Arbeitssuchende über 40  
5020 Salzburg  
[www.initiative40.at](http://www.initiative40.at)

ISIS (Information - Service - Schulung - Integration für sehbehinderte und blinde Menschen)  
8020 Graz  
[www.blind-isis.at](http://www.blind-isis.at)

IT-Lounge / waff  
1020 Vienna  
[www.waff.at](http://www.waff.at)

Initiative 40 Tirol - FIT4JOB  
6020 Innsbruck  
[www.initiative40.com](http://www.initiative40.com)

Innova Feldbach  
8330 Feldbach  
[www.innova.or.at](http://www.innova.or.at)

Insieme Familienberatungsstelle  
6020 Innsbruck  
[www.verein-insieme.at](http://www.verein-insieme.at)

Integrativer Bildungsverein - Bildungsassistenz  
1150 Vienna  
[www.biv-integrativ.at](http://www.biv-integrativ.at)  
J.O.B. service organisation - Team 45 plus Villach  
9500 Villach

Jobservice Universität Klagenfurt  
9020 Klagenfurt  
[www.uni-klu.ac.at/jobservice](http://www.uni-klu.ac.at/jobservice)

Jugend Info Burgenland  
7000 Eisenstadt  
[www.ljr.at](http://www.ljr.at)



Jugendservice des Landes OÖ  
4021 Linz  
[www.jugendservice.at](http://www.jugendservice.at)

Karriere club  
1090 Vienna  
[www.karriere-club.at](http://www.karriere-club.at)

Kassandra Beratungsstelle für arbeitssuchende Mädchen und Frauen  
2340 Mödling

Kompass Mädchenberatung Pinzgau  
5760 Saalfelden  
[www.einstieg.or.at](http://www.einstieg.or.at)

Kompass  
5020 Salzburg

LEFÖ - Lateinamerikan. exilierte Frauen in Österreich  
1050 Vienna

Lehrlings- und Jugendabteilung der AK Vorarlberg  
6800 Feldkirch  
[www.ak-vorarlberg.at/lehrlinge](http://www.ak-vorarlberg.at/lehrlinge)

Mafalda Beratung für Mädchen und junge Frauen  
8010 Graz  
[www.mafalda.at](http://www.mafalda.at)

MonA-Net Frauenservicestelle  
7012 Mattersburg  
[www.mona-net.at](http://www.mona-net.at)

Nova / waff  
1020 Vienna  
[www.waff.at](http://www.waff.at)

Nowa - Zentrum für Ausbildungsmanagement  
8042 Graz  
[www.nowa.at](http://www.nowa.at)

Orient Express - Beratungs-, Bildungs- u. Kulturinitiative für Frauen  
1020 Vienna

Osttiroler Verein Frauen helfen Frauen Frauenzentrum  
9900 Lienz

PASCH - Verein für Jugend, Beruf und Arbeit  
8020 Graz  
[www.pasch.or.at](http://www.pasch.or.at)

Patchwork (NÖ Volkshilfe)  
2700 Viennaer Neustadt

Peregrina Bildungs-, Beratungs- und Therapiezentrum für Immigrantinnen  
1090 Vienna  
[www.peregrina.at](http://www.peregrina.at)

Prisma-Zentrum für Ausbildungsmanagement  
8570 Voitsberg

Projektgruppe Frauen  
9020 Klagenfurt

Psychologische Beratungsstelle für Studierende Graz  
8010 Graz  
[www.studentenberatung.at](http://www.studentenberatung.at)

Psychologische Beratungsstelle für Studierende Innsbruck  
6020 Innsbruck  
[www.uibk.ac.at/c/c1/c117/index.html](http://www.uibk.ac.at/c/c1/c117/index.html)

Psychologische Beratungsstelle für Studierende Klagenfurt  
9020 Klagenfurt  
[www.uni-klu.ac.at/psb/](http://www.uni-klu.ac.at/psb/)

Psychologische Beratungsstelle für Studierende Linz  
4040 Linz  
[www.studentenberatung.at](http://www.studentenberatung.at)

Psychologische Beratungsstelle für Studierende Salzburg  
5020 Salzburg  
[www.sbg.ac.at/psb/](http://www.sbg.ac.at/psb/)

Psychologische Beratungsstelle für Studierende Vienna  
1080 Vienna

QualiLeo - Zentrum für Ausbildungsmanagement in Leoben  
8700 Leoben

Qualifizierung 45+ / waff  
1020 Vienna  
[www.waff.at](http://www.waff.at)

Referat für Behinderte und chronisch Kranke, Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz  
8010 Graz

Regionale Frauenqualifizierung  
8530 Deutschlandsberg  
[www.frauenqualifizierung.at](http://www.frauenqualifizierung.at)

Roma - Beratungsstelle, Verein Roma  
7400 Oberwart

SAB- Ausbildungsberatung  
8010 Graz  
[www.ausbildungsberatung.at](http://www.ausbildungsberatung.at)

SALE Oberösterreich  
4020 Linz  
[www.sale.or.at](http://www.sale.or.at)

SALE Projektmanagement & Consulting - Verein zur Beratung und Unterstützung  
stellenloser Lehrer/innen und Akademiker/innen  
8010 Graz

[www.sale-stmk.net](http://www.sale-stmk.net)

SUNWORK Bildungsalternativen für Mädchen und Frauen  
1140 Vienna  
[www.sunwork.at](http://www.sunwork.at)

Schulpsychologie-Bildungsberatung beim Landesschulrat Burgenland  
7001 Eisenstadt  
[www.lsr-bgld.gv.at/psych/psych.htm](http://www.lsr-bgld.gv.at/psych/psych.htm)

Schulpsychologie-Bildungsberatung beim Landesschulrat Kärnten  
9020 Klagenfurt

Schulpsychologie-Bildungsberatung beim Landesschulrat Niederösterreich  
3109 St. Pölten

Schulpsychologie-Bildungsberatung beim Landesschulrat Oberösterreich  
4041 Linz  
[www.lsr-ooe.gv.at/schulpsychologie/default.htm](http://www.lsr-ooe.gv.at/schulpsychologie/default.htm)

Schulpsychologie-Bildungsberatung beim Landesschulrat Steiermark  
8011 Graz  
[www.lsr-stmk.gv.at](http://www.lsr-stmk.gv.at)

Schulpsychologie-Bildungsberatung beim Landesschulrat Tirol  
6020 Innsbruck  
[www.asn-ibk.ac.at/schulpsychologie/homepage.htm](http://www.asn-ibk.ac.at/schulpsychologie/homepage.htm)

Schulpsychologie-Bildungsberatung beim Landesschulrat Vorarlberg  
6900 Bregenz  
[www.vobs.at/landesschulrat/service.htm](http://www.vobs.at/landesschulrat/service.htm)

Schulpsychologie-Bildungsberatung beim Landesschulrat für Salzburg  
5010 Salzburg  
[www.land.salzburg.at](http://www.land.salzburg.at)

Schulpsychologie-Bildungsberatung beim Stadtschulrat Vienna  
1010 Vienna  
[www.magVienna.gv.at/ssr/ansprechpartner/anspr5.htm](http://www.magVienna.gv.at/ssr/ansprechpartner/anspr5.htm)

Schulservice im Landesschulrat für Burgenland  
7000 Eisenstadt  
[www.lsr-bgld.gv.at](http://www.lsr-bgld.gv.at)

Sprungbrett für Mädchen  
1150 Vienna  
[www.sprungbrett.or.at](http://www.sprungbrett.or.at)  
Studien- und MaturantInnenberatung der ÖH Uni Graz  
8010 Graz  
[www-oeh.kfunigraz.ac.at](http://www-oeh.kfunigraz.ac.at)

Studien- und MaturantInnenberatung der ÖH Uni Innsbruck  
6020 Innsbruck  
[oehinfo.uibk.ac.at/](http://oehinfo.uibk.ac.at/)

Studien- und MaturantInnenberatung der ÖH Uni Klagenfurt  
9020 Klagenfurt

[www.oeh-klagenfurt.at](http://www.oeh-klagenfurt.at)

Studien- und MaturantInnenberatung der ÖH Uni Leoben  
8700 Leoben  
[oehwww.unileoben.ac.at/](http://oehwww.unileoben.ac.at/)

Studien- und MaturantInnenberatung der ÖH Uni Linz  
4040 Linz  
[www.oeh.jku.at](http://www.oeh.jku.at)

Trendwerk - Verein zur Förderung der Integration am Arbeitsmarkt  
7350 Oberpullendorf

Trendwerk - Verein zur Förderung der Integration am Arbeitsmarkt  
7551 Stegersbach

VSG-woman  
4020 Linz  
[www.sozialpraevention.at](http://www.sozialpraevention.at)

Verein Frauen für Frauen  
4400 Steyr

Verein Frauenbetreuungs- und Frauenservicestellen BABS  
4240 Freistadt

Verein Frauenservice Graz  
8020 Graz  
[www.frauenservice.at](http://www.frauenservice.at)

Verein Frauentreffpunkt - Frauenberatung Salzburg  
5020 Salzburg

Verein Initiative Frau & Arbeit Lungau  
5580 Tamsweg

Verein Initiative Frau & Arbeit Pinzgau, Beratungsstelle zum beruflichen Wiedereinstieg  
5700 Zell am See

Verein Initiative Frau & Arbeit Pongau  
5500 Bischofshofen  
[www.Frau-und-Arbeit.at](http://www.Frau-und-Arbeit.at)

Verein Initiative Frau & Arbeit Salzburg  
5020 Salzburg

Verein MAIZ  
4020 Linz  
[www.servus.at/maiz](http://www.servus.at/maiz)

Verein Wendepunkt - Frauenberatung  
2700 Viennaer Neustadt

Verein für Lehrerbeschäftigung und Lehrerweiterbildung VLBW  
5020 Salzburg  
[www.vlbw.at](http://www.vlbw.at)

WIA - Zentrum für Ausbildungsmanagement  
8940 Liezen  
www.wia.co.at

WIFI Steiermark Berufsinformation  
8021 Graz  
www.stmk.wifi.at

migrare - Zentrum für MigrantInnen OÖ  
4020 Linz  
www.migration.at

zBp - Zentrum für Berufsplanung  
1090 Vienna  
www.zbp.at

zb - Zentrum für Beratung, Training und Entwicklung  
3500 Krems

### **3.4. Public employment service AMS (110 locations)**

According to the OECD report mentioned above, the Austrian Federal Employment Office (AMS) delivers its services through some 110 local offices. In a common strategy of AMS all locations should be enabled to provide services on an integrated, three-tier model. The first level is a self-service area and is available to all target groups. This level gives access to basic information and job vacancy information. At the second level, the service area, personal advice, information, job placement and unemployment benefit administration is available to job seekers. The third level involves more intensive counselling and advice for those with particularly difficult labour market problems.

All locations of the public employment service are available in the internet: [www.ams.or.at](http://www.ams.or.at)

### **3.5. Research about career and education and co-ordination (7 locations)**

Amt der Vorarlberger Landesregierung Abt. Wissenschaft und Weiterbildung  
6900 Bregenz

Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Kultur - Abteilung Erwachsenenbildung  
1010 Vienna

Frauendokumentations- Forschungs- und Bildungszentrum Graz  
8010 Graz  
www.doku.at

Studien- und MaturantInnenberatung der ÖH - Bundesvertretung  
1090 Vienna  
www.oeh.ac.at/

Studieninformation des BMBWK, Abt. VII/9  
1010 Vienna  
www.bmwf.gv.at/index2.htm

Verband NÖ VHS  
3100 St. Pölten

Zukunftszentrum GmbH

6020 Innsbruck  
www.zukunftszentrum.at

### **3.6. Private organisations (17 locations)**

According to the database of the platform "Bildungsberater im Netz (Career Counselors online)", 17 commercial private organisations and consultants are available in Austria in the field of career counselling and guidance services. In the context of the needs of career counselling in further education and negative tendencies on the labour market, it is suggested that the number of commercial consultants in this field is quite higher and rising as well.

4confidence consulting  
9500 Villach  
www.4confidence.at

Academy4socialskills  
1080 Vienna  
www.socialskills4you.com

COACHINGSTONES-CONSULTINGS  
1180 Vienna

Coaching-Creative  
1030 Vienna  
www.coaching-creative.at

DIE LEPSCHY-Coaching/Training/Supervision  
8600 Bruck/Mur  
www.dielepschy.com

ETC-academy vienna  
1080 Vienna  
www.ets-academy.com

Forum Bildung  
1030 Vienna  
www.forumbildung.at

Gerald Hehenberger  
3500 Krems

Mag. Christa Opocensky-Fichtinger  
1040 Vienna

Mag. Helmut Rüsçh  
1160 Vienna  
www.biberue.at.tf

Mag. Marika Hammerer  
1060 Vienna

Quick Bildungsassistenz  
8053 Graz  
www.jaw.or.at



STS Psychologie  
1160 Vienna  
www.turek-schuster.at

SuCoO.net  
6020 Innsbruck  
www.sucoo.net

Team Breitensee  
1140 Vienna

akad. Supervisorin, Margit Maria Voglhofer  
1070 Vienna

coach4success  
1190 Vienna  
coach4success.at

## **4. Training programs for special groups**

### **4.1. Counseling concerning educational paths**

As an important and distinctive feature of career guidance in Austria, 1998-99 Austrian legislation has provided for all grade 7 and 8 students to take part in career education lessons. Austrian schools are therefore organised according to a three-level model: career education lessons by career teachers, individual advice by student advisors, and both of these supplemented by a School Psychology Service (Schulpsychologie-Bildungsberatung). By the law, 32 lesson periods per year are obligatory for students in school.

The OECD "Review of Career Guidance Policies – Country Note Austria" (March 2003) names the effectiveness of this integrated model as an issue of some debate in Austria. According to the OECD it is often felt that this model does not give career education the importance that it deserves and at times it is not clear that the required hours really are devoted to careers. While student advisers who provide individual assistance, are teachers with a special training, teachers who are in the most time responsible for career guidance often are not adequately trained to teach it.

Career guidance in Austrian schools, of both the careers teachers and the student advisers can be supplemented by the School Psychology Service. This relatively small staffed service is responsible for organising the training programmes for student advisers, its policy formulation and co-ordination and could furthermore – in accordance to the OECD – be more involved in specialised career advice.

Activities in Austrian schools are supported in an important way by agencies from outside the school. Especially the Federal Employment Office (AMS) with its career information centres (BIZ) are regularly visited by groups of school students taking part in organised programmes designed to provide them with job and career information.

Austria's career guidance services in tertiary education are relatively under-developed, according to the statements of OECD. The Ministry of Education has established six Psychological Student Counselling Service centres to assist universities and Fachhochschulen (universities of applied studies). According to investigations of OECD this service has a high standard of professionalism, but largely deals with personal, emotional and study problems experienced by enrolled students, rather than specifically with career decision making and career development issues.

Additionally several institutions and platforms for career guidance and professional networking are created by student organisations and often supported by the respective university and/or other organisations.

#### **4.2. Counseling concerning occupation selection**

Counselling about schools, apprenticeships, studies or professions, is provided to students in schools and universities and employees on all stages of their professional development by a number of very varying institutions. Euroguide Austria, based at the National Leonardo da Vinci agency provides information about the following counselling organisations involved in occupation selection:

##### **Federal Employment Office AMS**

As already mentioned in A) Counselling concerning educational paths, AMS is the main Austrian player in the field of occupation. Counseling by AMS is provided in an integrated three-tier model (please see 3. D) Public employment service AMS).

##### **Arbeiterkammer Österreich AK – Chamber of Workers**

As listed in this report under 3. A) Career counseling in general, the Austrian chamber of workers offers counseling in all stages of education, career and occupation.

##### **bic – Berufsinformationscomputer – Occupation information computer**

bic is an internet based counseling and information service of the Austrian chamber of commerce and available under [www.bic.at](http://www.bic.at). It offers information to hundreds of professions and links to appropriate education offerings. Furthermore visitors of the website can find out more about suited occupation selection due to a computer based personalized online profile.

##### **Bildungsberater im Netz - Career Counselors online**

[www.bib-infonet.at](http://www.bib-infonet.at) is a platform for the exchange of information and experiences in the field of career counseling in Austria. As this platform is recommended by Euroguide, it is also the source of addresses listed in chapter 3 in this report.

##### **Austrian Trade Union of Salaried Employees GPA – Youth**

GPA is the largest trade union in Austria supporting the interests of employees on all levels as well as students in schools and universities.

##### **Searching machine „eduVista“**

[www.eduvista.com](http://www.eduvista.com) is a service supported by ESF and the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture. According to the model of a searching machine connected with several data bases, eduVista gives an comprehensive overview about Austrian organisations offering counselling and education in certain fields required by visitors concerned with their occupation selection.

##### **Austrian Chamber of Commerce WKO**

As already shown in chapter 3 of this report, the Austrian chamber of commerce is an organisation providing information and counselling in (further) education and occupation. Main task of the chamber in the field of occupation is to promote industrial training.

#### **4.3. Counseling concerning work recruitment**

Besides to the counseling activities of the Federal Employment Office AMS (mainly described in this report in 3. D) Public employment service AMS), it is usual in Austria to use a mix work recruitment strategies in order to be aware of job offerings and jobs in the hidden job markets as well. AMS offers a service called “Samsomat”, which enables jobseeking with computers at the jobcenters of AMS. Furthermore, job offerings in Austria and Europe are published under [www.ams.or.at](http://www.ams.or.at). For work recruitment it is also possible to publish own announcements on the costs of AMS.

Newspapers and magazines mostly publish job offerings in their print edition and at their websites as well. It is most common that newspapers not only provide job offerings, but also inform about job profiles, education and the situation on different markets by their own editorial stuff on the topics of "career counseling". Besides some newspapers and media organise counseling activities by bringing together companies, experts and jobseekers and reporting about those events in order to reach a larger audience.

Austrian newspapers that also provide important career information by their editors are i. e. Der Standard, [www.derstandard.at](http://www.derstandard.at); Kleine Zeitung, [www.kleine.co.at](http://www.kleine.co.at); Kronenzeitung, [www.krone.at](http://www.krone.at); Kurier, [www.kurier.at](http://www.kurier.at); Die Presse, [www.diepresse.at](http://www.diepresse.at); Salzburger Nachrichten, [www.Salzburg.com](http://www.Salzburg.com); Wiener Zeitung, [www.wienerzeitung.at](http://www.wienerzeitung.at). Commercial special interest media and publications free of charge available at institutions are commonly used for additional information about work recruitment and job offerings.

In order to get counselling directly by experts and practitioners in the field of own interests and skills, recruiting and networking events become more and more popular in Austria. Some examples are:

- job fairs at universities
- recruiting fairs at universities
- fairs and conferences related to branches
- restaurants known as places to meet representatives of certain branches
- bill-boards
- specific events
- centres for professional planning (i.e. at the university of economics)
- placards at institutes of universities
- IAESTE TU Vienna
- AISEC
- European Commission
- development services
- social institutions and non profit organisations
- funds for scientific research etc.
- academies
- associations
- chamber of work, chamber of commerce
- ministries

Furthermore there is an increasing demand on recruitment consultancies in Austria. While some recruitment consultancies act as „head-hunters“ looking out for managers and executives only, most of recruitment consultancies are also interested in „high potentials“.

#### **4.4. Counseling concerning retraining**

The main driver in retraining and counseling in this field in Austria is the Federal Employment Office AMS. Measures of qualifications are AMS's main important activities of support. In 2004 AMS spent 413.22 Mio. EUR for the qualification of unemployed persons and employees which is 64 % of the money spent in order to support the labour market.

141.500 persons (68.520 women) took part on courses provided on behalf of AMS. The average time of participation have been 64 days.

Additionally another 33.003 persons (17.266 women) in unemployment took part on courses offered on the free education market and financed by the AMS with 33.76 Mio. EUR.

Another important Austrian organisation involved in counseling concerning retraining is Arbeiterkammer (chamber of workers).

## **5. Career counseling as a part of national strategy for education, employment and other projects/initiatives**

Looking at the national strategy for education and employment, it is a broadly identified political statement in Austria, that life-long learning plays a key role for the European unions Lisbon strategy. On the side of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, it is stated that career counseling is a central point in this debate and cannot end, when students leave school. The ministry of education therefore wants to continue co-operations on regional levels in Austria as well as traditional co-operations with the ministry of economics and labour, the Austrian Employment Office (AMS) and social partners.

In 2004 the Austrian minister for economics and labour referred to the fact that in Austria the participation on courses for further education has increased in the last 15 years from 12 % of all employees to 32 %. According to the ministry of economics and labour, special attention should be paid to further education of employees in small and medium-sized enterprises because due to limited capabilities in staff and infrastructure, only 24 % of Austrian employees work in companies that provide internal further education.

The Austrian Chamber of Economics provides informative data on the situation of women: 3 from 4 women in professional apprenticeships work in one of only five professions and 65 % of unemployed women come from only 4 professions (office management, tourism, trade and cleaning services). Taking into account this data it is obvious that career orientation and counseling still doesn't play its appropriate role in Austria.

## **6. Existence of Entrepreneurship (self-employment) element in career counseling programs**

Entrepreneurship as a increasing chance and challenge in the structural changing labour market in Austria is still mainly supported by specialised organisations and initiatives and not a defined element of counseling programs in general. Characteristic for counseling in the field of self-employment in Austria is the orientation on start-up companies that don't meet the situation of one-person-companies.

Entrepreneurship services and institutions are available all over the country. Although there are some services orientated on the specific needs of foundations in different branches even large institutions offering counseling for entrepreneurship do not take into account important differences in the working reality of founders: training and consulting mostly do not differentiate enough between persons working in productions or services, an office or at home (i.e. regarding financial aspects), in the business-to-business or business-to-consumer sector (i.e. regarding marketing strategies). Besides counseling in the field of self-employment often lacks specific market knowledge.

## **7. Associations gathering career counselors**

Aside from the Viennese Association of Career Counsellors (Wiener Verband für Berufsberatung) there is no official Austrian representation for career counsellors. This association based in Vienna is a member of the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) and has its main focus on improving professionalism in the field of career counselling.

In the context of professionalism in career counselling there are two European projects coordinated from Austria supported by Leonardo da Vinci: "RIPERIJ0 - Right Person in the Right Job - Train the trainers in the field of career guidance." FO.FO.S - Forum for supporting self-employment develops a "train-the-trainer"-training program in the field of career guidance. This program is especially targeting for the needs of trainers and counsellors who are active in the labour market programs.

Another project, "MEVOC – Quality manual for educational and vocational counselling" is coordinated by the Institute for Research on Qualification and Training of the Austrian Economy (ibw) and has the aim to develop a practice-oriented, interactive online tool that helps educational and vocational counsellors to identify high-quality counselling.

## ***Bibliography***

OECD: "Review of policies for career information, guidance and counselling services" (2002)

OECD: "Review of Career Guidance Policies – Country Note Austria" (2003)

OECD: "Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap" (2004)

Austrian Chamber of Commerce, [www.wko.at](http://www.wko.at)

Austrian Chamber of Workers, [www.arbeiterkammer.at](http://www.arbeiterkammer.at)

Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture, [www.bmbwk.gv.at](http://www.bmbwk.gv.at)

Austrian Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour, [www.bmwa.gv.at](http://www.bmwa.gv.at)

Austrian Public Employment Office (AMS), [www.ams.or.at](http://www.ams.or.at)

Bildungsberater im Netz (Career Counselors online), [www.bib-infonet.at](http://www.bib-infonet.at)

Euroguidance, [www.leonardodavinci.at](http://www.leonardodavinci.at)

MEVOC – Quality manual for educational and vocational counselling, [www.mevoc.net](http://www.mevoc.net)

"RIPERIJ0 - Right Person in the Right Job, [www.riperijo.org](http://www.riperijo.org)

Viennese Association of Career Counselors (Wiener Verband für Berufsberatung), [www.berufsberater.at](http://www.berufsberater.at)

## **IV. STATE OF THE ART IN ROMANIA**

### **1. Definition of career counselling/ career counsellor in your country**

Information, guidance and counselling are identified as priority tasks in the Communication from the Commission "Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality" (2001) and in the Copenhagen Declaration (2002). Guidance services should be accessible to all citizens, especially those at risk of exclusion, and tailored to their needs through systems that are coherent, cohesive, transparent, impartial and of high quality.

In Romania the national structure for information, guidance, and counseling services began to emerge between 1935 – 1949 and this represented the first important period in the field of vocational guidance. The development of agricultural and industrial production led to the need of scientific organization of labour and of the need to link technical change with human factors. During this period, big enterprises organized psycho-technical laboratories with the purpose of: improving labour organization and production reorganization on a scientific basis, creating a process of vocational selection, guidance and reorientation of personnel.

In the same period Psycho-Technical Institutes and Vocational Guidance Offices that were subordinated to the Labour Ministry. The Psycho- Technical Institutes – from Bucuresti, Iasi and Cluj – had in 15 Vocational Guidance Offices with the purpose of examine psychological / medical status of apprenticeship candidates and to guide them toward adequate professions. Meanwhile the Education Ministry created the Council for School and Vocational Guidance, and within the County School Inspectorates positions for inspectors in school and vocational guidance, issues were created.

After the Second World War, the interest regarding psychology and pedagogy applications in vocational selection and guidance declined for about two decades. However, between 1960 – 1980, a gradual increase of interest in this field emerged, but then declined again until the December 1989 Revolution. In 1991, at county level, (according to Ministry of Education Order no. 7895/18.09.1991) Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres for teachers were created, and were subordinated to County School Inspectorates, and the School Inspectorate Bucharest.

In 1992 – 1993 the World Bank evaluated career guidance in Romania and pointed out the necessity of creating a national coherent system for information and vocational counselling to provide information to individuals on changes in the labour market. Based on this evaluation a "Career Information and Counselling" component was created in the Ministry of Labour "Employment and Social Protection" project which was co-financed by the World Bank. The five year project started at the middle of 1995.

Information, guidance and counselling services refers to services intended to assist individuals of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational training and occupational choices to better manage their careers. They include a wide range of activities: for example, activities within schools to help students clarify career goals and understand the world of work; personal or group -based assistance with decisions about initial courses of study, courses of vocational training, further education and training, initial job choice, job change, or work force re-entry; services to provide information about jobs and careers or to help individuals make career choices; and services to produce and disseminate information about jobs, courses of study and vocational training. They include services provided to those who have not yet entered the labour force, services to job seekers, and services to those who are employed.



## 2. Legislation concerning career counselling

The actual structure and administration of the Romanian education system are still influenced by their historical past, when a special attention was conferred to industrial and agricultural sectors. In the last two decades, the Romanian education and training system has been reorganized. Changes have been introduced to reflect the transformation of the labour market and changing technological and production process.

There are some important legal instruments steering guidance and information services. Education Act No. 84/1995 regulates the information, guidance and counselling activities organised by institutions that come under the Ministry of Education. Article 49 of the Law states that:

(1) in each county and in the capital Bucharest exist Psycho -Pedagogical Assistance Centres or Offices; these also ensure educational and vocational guidance activities; (2) the regulation of this centre function is established by order of the Ministry of Education<sup>36</sup>.

Other legal instruments regulate aspects relating to the Statute of the Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres (CPPAC), define the job description for guidance teachers and counsellors, and set out the regulations regarding the Organisation and Functioning of the Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres and of the Inter-School Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Offices (ISPPAO).

The Ministry of Education Order No. 31314/10.05.1994 and 683/28.09.1998, includes regulations for the organization and functioning of the CPPAC and ISPPAO.

The information, guidance and counselling activities operated by institutions subordinated to Ministry of Labor are regulated by Law no. 145/9.07.1998 regarding the establishment, organization and function of the National Employment and Vocational Training Agency (now the National Employment Agency, NAE). According to Art. 6 alin. (2) of this law, the employment agency offers two kinds of services: services for individuals and services for employers.

The first category includes guidance and counselling services for unemployed people and for others with the purpose of finding proper jobs. The Agency administers an Information and Vocational Counselling Centres network, with which provides career information, guidance and counselling based on Common Order of the MoL (Order no. 921 / 24.12.1997), MoE (Order no. 3102 / 15.01.1998) and MoY (Order no. 59 / 22.01.1998).

Also, the Law no. 76 / January 16 20025 regarding the Unemployment Insurances System and Labour Force Employment Stimulation stipulates in Art 57 *“the increase of employment opportunities for persons looking for a job is to be supported by information and vocational counselling”*. Art.58 of the Law stipulates:

- Information and vocational counselling includes free services destined for people looking for a job with the goal of: offering information concerning labour market and occupations evolution; personality evaluation and self-evaluation regarding vocational guidance; abilities and self-confidence development for people looking for jobs with the purpose of making its own career decisions; and learning job searching methods and techniques:
- Information and vocational counselling is provided by specialized centres organized within the employment agencies, and by other accredited centres, and services

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<sup>36</sup> Source: Education Law no. 84 / 1995, modified by Emergency Governmental Ordinance no. 36 / 1997 and by Law no. 15 / 1999.

providers from both public and private sector that establish contracts with the employment agencies.

- Information regarding the labour market, establishing professional education training avenues, evaluation and self-evaluation made through self- information, individual and group counselling services to people looking for jobs, and services provide through job-clubs organized by the employment agencies.
- Counsellors for career guidance offer vocational counselling and teach methods and techniques for job search and for presentation at employment<sup>37</sup>.

The National Plan for Employment (NAPE) was developed with support from a EUPHARE RO9908 twining project “The Elaboration of the National Action Plan for Employment” and was adopted by the Romanian Government through the Decision of Government No.759/20027 and will be implemented by the end of December 2003. NAPE stipulates at Guideline No.1 – Career Information and Counselling as a major active method in order to prevent and combat unemployment among young people and adults (especially long-term unemployed people). Guideline 1 specifically addresses tackling youth unemployment and preventing long-term unemployment. Every unemployed person receives a new start before reaching six months of unemployment, in the case of young people, or 12 months of unemployment in the case of adults. This comes in the form of training, retraining, work practice, a job, or other employability increase measures, including, *accompanying individual vocational guidance and counselling with a view to effective integration into the labor market.*

#### **Other laws that affect career information, guidance and counselling services**

- Govern Ordinance 129/2000 concerning Adults Vocational Training in Enterprises, modified and approved by Law no. 375/2002;
- New Labour Code stipulates a special attention for vocational training in enterprises;
- Govern Decision 844/2002 concerning approval of classifications for jobs, professions and specialisations destined post high school that offer vocational training as well as approval of scholar period;
- Govern Decision 277/21.03.2002 regarding approval of the Criteria for accreditation the specialized services providers for stimulation labour force employment.

### **3. Types of institutions/organizations involved in career counseling and guidance services**

The task of providing career information, guidance and counselling in Romania is shared by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Youth. There are some private information, guidance and counselling services, but these focus mainly on selecting and placing personnel in what is generally a highly qualified and specialised labour force sector. Recent initiatives include online vocational guidance services for adults.

#### **3.1. Public sector**

Data provided by the Institute of Educational Sciences and by the Ministries of Education and Labour indicate that there are approximately 650 counsellors in educational settings and 450 counsellors in labour market settings. A further 100 counsellors work in the institutional structures of other ministries, or are employed by associations and private companies. Of a

<sup>37</sup> Art. 64 of the same law stipulates: “the access to the vocational training program is to be made available after the information and counselling activity”.

total of 1,200 counsellors, around 60% are aged between 25 and 40, with more than 80% being female<sup>38</sup>.

Under Government Order 1997, three ministries: Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Youth (Order 921 MoL / 3102 MoE / 59 MoY / 1997 regarding organization and function of the *Information and Vocational Counseling Centers network* signed a protocol providing for the creation of a national network of Information and Vocational Counselling Centres, including 227 centres in County Agencies for Labour Force Employment, 500 centres in school units and 47 information centres for youth. The goals of these centres are:

- To offer information regarding the labour market, related education and training, and related personality evaluations and self-evaluations; and
- To develop the abilities and self-confidence for students and adults in making career decisions in the context of economic and social changes of Romanian society.

This network of school and vocational guidance centers represents a convergence point for activity of three ministries: Education and Research Ministry, Labour and Social Solidarity, Ministry and Youth and Sports Ministry, and also helped support and stimulate related services in the non-governmental sector and private sector.

Later, two collaboration protocols have been established between the three involved ministries. The first protocol, dated on July 2001, is established to continue "*Information and Vocational Counselling*" activity. This document defines tasks and responsibilities for signatory institutions with the purpose of sustaining work-group activity for fulfilling project objectives and for continuing information and vocational counselling activity in subordinated units after The World Bank financing ends.

#### **The Ministry of Education and Research (MoE) network includes:**

- *Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres (CCPPAC)*. These are present in all counties as well as in the capital. In addition *Inter-School Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Offices (ISPPAO)* are organized in schools with more than 800 students or in clusters of schools with smaller populations. The targeted population consists of pupils of all levels of pre-university education, educational staff and parents. Such territorial centres are subordinated to the County School Inspectorates, are guided from the methodological point of view by Education Sciences Institute and they are being funded from the state budget. The goals of CPPAC are ISPPAO co-ordination and mediation of ISPPAO relations with other institutions for school vocational guidance. These offices offer services of information, guidance, counselling, and psycho-pedagogical assistance for pupils, teachers and parents with the purpose of fulfilling the educational and formational objectives of the school, for the benefit of harmonious individual development and good socio-professional integration. Staff involved in guidance activities has their rights and duties set out in a special statute; they are expected to work 40 hours per week, of which two to four hours are dedicated to teaching, and 18 hours to activities in the counselling office. Staff can also be involved in leading aspects of the counselling and guidance area of the curriculum. All staff involved in the delivery of information, guidance and counselling services are required to have studied psychology, pedagogy, sociology and social work at university. In most cases, graduate studies are followed by specialised training at the Master's level, or other courses organised by universities within various programmes. However, such postgraduate training is not a prerequisite for obtaining a counselling position in the pre-university education sector.

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<sup>38</sup> 2003 data, Source: Review of Career Counseling in Acceding and Candidate Countries. Synthesis report, July 2003, ETF

- Guidance regarding vocational route choice and placement on the labour market *Departments* (DG) (1998) - These are organized in big university centres. At the national level, 14 DGs exist but in reality only six are active<sup>39</sup>. The goal of these departments is to offer information regarding existing educational programmes and to support the students/graduates contact with labour market. They operated previously as *Information and Guidance Centres (IGC)*. Personnel employed in these centres include graduates from the social sciences;
- *Complex Expertise Commissions* , a 2002 initiative- These commissions offer psycho-diagnosis and guidance for students with disabilities.
- *National Association for School and Vocational Guidance (NASVG)* This is a professional association with interdisciplinary character which supports technical assistance, training, and research for staff, working with youth and adults, from schools and the career guidance field.

**The Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity (MoL) network includes:**

- *Career Information and Counselling Centres (CICC)* that exist in the framework Career Information and Counselling Centres (CICC) that exist in the framework of the National Agency for Labour Force Employment (NAE), which are located in all counties of the country and in the major cities. The major client group is people searching for a job<sup>40</sup>. The target clientele of the centres are young graduates, unemployed people, and adults searching for employment, among others. The centres provide information regarding the labour market and education and training routes, help clients draw up a personality profile, offer guidance to unemployed people and act as go-betweens with potential employers. They strive to establish supply–demand equilibrium in the labour market and to institutionalise social dialogue in the area of vocational placement and training. They also implement vocational placement and training strategies. Guidance specialists employed within the labour ministry have a higher education background; many are sociologists, legal experts, economists or engineers, but one also finds psychologists, pedagogues and social workers. A number of them have followed the public policy Master's courses within the career information and guidance project, specialising in career counselling.

**The Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoY) network includes:**

- *Information and Consultancy Centres for Youth (INFOTIN)* work within the framework of the National Agency for Supporting Youth Initiatives (NASYI) and services whose target audience are youths aged 16-26. Themes include access to public information, mobility, distance education, the use of ICT, leisure time, the social rights of young people, vocational training and self-improvement, as well as educational and career guidance. These centres are to be found in each county, and have been operational since 1994.

**The Ministry of Health and Family (MoH) network includes:**

- *Educational and Vocational Guidance Medical Commissions and Prophylactic Medicine Centres* which deal with the medical validation of educational and vocational guidance for students at the pre-university level.
- *Information and Consultancy Pilot Centres for Families* which offer information and consultancy to families.

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<sup>39</sup> Public Policies and Career Development: A Framework for the Design of Career Information, Guidance and Counselling Services in Developing Countries - *Country Report on Romania*, World Bank

<sup>40</sup> Person registered at NAE or any employment services provider, legal accredited, for to be supported in job search.

Specialists working in the Ministry of Health's counselling network also have a higher education background, with some having followed further training courses such as a Master's degree in counselling.

Aspects of personal counselling are offered within services that fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, but these are more broadly linked to personal guidance and only tackle career guidance incidentally.

All institutions above are funded by the state budget. For the labor market, there are other career information, guidance and counselling providers from both public and private sector (private sector employment agencies are accredited by NAE).

Additional information, guidance and counselling programmes were developed through projects funded by Phare, Tempus, Leonardo da Vinci, Phare - RICOP.

For instance, the National Resources Centre for Vocational Guidance activities of the EUROGUIDANCE network, subcomponent of European Union Programme for Professional Formation "Leonardo da Vinci". NRCVG is a centre for collecting and disseminating information concerning education and vocational training at the national level and at other European similar centres level too. Additional details on the National Resources Centre for Vocational Guidance NRCVG can be obtained at the Euroguidance Romania web site: [www.cnrop.ise.ro](http://www.cnrop.ise.ro) (available in Romanian, French and English).

Some recent initiatives have reinforced career guidance in schools. These include

- the introduction of counselling and guidance as a curricular area in the National Curriculum at the pre-university level (with effect from the academic year starting 1998);
- the introduction, at the postsecondary level, of a new curricular area, vocational guidance and counselling (in the first year of the two-year course of study) and information and vocational guidance (in the second year) as an aspect of the VET Reform, funded by the EU under the Phare programme (VET RO 9405);
- the establishment in 1999 of a National Resources Centre for Vocational Guidance (NRCVG) in the Euroguidance Network, mentioned above;
- the offer of a Master's degree in counselling and guidance at Romanian Universities (Bucharest and Cluj);
- and the establishment – thanks to co-funding by the Romanian Government and the World Bank – of a Master's degree in public policy at the University of Bucharest, with around 900 graduates taking their major in career information and counselling.
- In addition to this, further training opportunities became available when Romania joined the ACADEMIA Project, a European exchange programme for counsellors administered by the NRCVG.

### **3.2. Private Sector**

The private (for-profit sector) information, guidance and counselling services are focused mainly on the finding, selection and placement of personnel, generally highly qualified and specialised labour force. Some private institutions or companies contract these private employment agencies, which also provide career guidance and counseling services to select, test and employ personnel, according to specific criteria and standards. This activity is increasing judging from indirect data such as announcements in media, informal discussions with certain clients etc. In addition some recent initiatives include online counselling and vocational training for adults.

Little information is available on the type of their clients or the level of the fees requested for services rendered. The Association for Excellency in Career Provided On Line and career evaluation and counselling services is about 10 Euro/session.(see [www.1educat.ro](http://www.1educat.ro)).



There is no official framework for community action in information, guidance and counselling. Some ad-hoc community initiatives generated by parents, teachers, alumni, local authorities are aimed at placing citizens in the local labour force, encouraging participation in various projects or opening small businesses.

Some NGOs provide career guidance for specialized groups of clients (i.e. disadvantaged youth).

According by Law 76/2002, Art. 58, point 2 the career information, guidance and counselling services are provided by CICC and by other providers from both public and private sector that must be accredited by National Agency for Employment (NAE). When CICC can't satisfy all the requests for these services, they can establish contracts with private providers financed by unemployed budget (the private providers' prices are expensive, approximately 30 EURO/ counselled person). This is a new initiative.

These providers are accredited by NAE, according to GD 277/2002 regarding approval of the Criteria for accreditation the specialized services providers for stimulation labour force employment. The specialized employment services for stimulation labour force employment, stipulated in GD 277, are: information and counselling services and labour mediation services on internal market. This GD does not stipulate regulations regarding the fees of the services.

For accreditation, NAE receives an annual fee, the size of which is established by Ministry of Labour for each service provider. The income from these fees goes to the unemployment insurance budget.

#### **Private Employment Services Accredited by NAE**

<b>Provider type **</b>	<b>2002*</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>Total</b>
NGO	12	3	15
Private	36	6	42
Total	48	9	57

\* From March 2002, \*\* Until May 2003, Source: Public Policies and Career Development: A Framework for the Design of Career Information, Guidance and Counselling Services in Developing Countries - *Country Report on Romania*, World Bank

All the public agencies mentioned above furnish both information and counselling services and labor mediation services. From March 21/2002 Govern Decision 277 regulates accreditation (licenses) for the public and private providers of these services. The providers' accreditations are made by the NAE through county employment agencies. The validity of the accreditation is 4 years and after this period the accreditation will be reviewed.

Before the related GD County Employment Agencies designed and implemented Active Labor Measures for displaced workers. These services were not provided by the county agencies themselves, but were contracted out to public or private services providers. The county agencies were responsible for the public announcements to contractors, for conducting the contracting process and for finalizing contracts with service providers which were financed from a related World Bank project. The Impact of Active Labor Market Programs Study (April 2002) shows that, as of September 1, 2001, there were 88 such

contracts, 31,679 clients served, 6,610 clients placed, and the cost/client was \$12,46, and cost/placement was \$59.70<sup>41</sup>.

#### **4. Curricula**

Starting the 1998-1999 school year, the "Counselling and Guidance" Curricular area was included in the National Curriculum. Ministry Order no. 3064/18.01.2000 specify two different directions of making school and vocational guidance in the education Romanian system: through curricular activities (especially within Counselling and Guidance classes), and through extracurricular activities (especially within ISPPAO).

The Counselling and Guidance class content includes:

- Psycho-pedagogical counselling of the students;
- Counselling for over- gifted students;
- Counselling for students with disciplinary or learning problems;
- School and vocational guidance of the students.

According to the pre-university Curriculum published in 2001, this curricular area was allotted one hour per week starting the 5th grade to the final high school grades (12th /13th). The activities of this curricular area covered within class leader's program of instruction which are mandatory. The Counselling and Guidance classes are taught mainly by psycho-pedagogues in schools that have employed teaching staff with this speciality, or social sciences teachers or even teachers of another speciality (appointed by the School Board). Once appointed, these persons are responsible for drawing up the thematic schedule of the Counselling and Guidance subject that must be approved by the School Administration Board. In those schools that have in their staff specialists in psychology / pedagogy these staff support the Counselling and Guidance classes and provide assistance to teachers.

Within the national Curriculum for pre-university education, the Counselling and Guidance curricular area represents a new element. In fact very little time is allocated to career counselling and more to social and personal counselling.

For the Counselling and Guidance Curriculum, destined to the gymnasium level, the options list recommended by the ministry (according with Order no. 4224/22.07.1998) includes the themes: resolving conflicts, personal hygiene, intercultural education, efficient learning techniques, child and student rights, me and my family. For the high school education (9-12 grades), the optional courses that the administration Board and the teachers Board from each high school are obliged to include in the Curriculum, at school decision (CDS), are: career guidance, entrepreneurial education, civic culture, education regarding human rights, development education, European studies, mass-media education. Within the optional packages can be included programmes made by non-governmental organisations (e.g. "Junior Achievement", "The decision is yours").

The Project for the Reform of the Technical Vocational Training in Romania, funded by the EU under the PHARE program introduced in 1997, in vocational school curriculum a new curricular area named *Vocational Guidance and Counselling* (in the second and tertiary year) and in the post-secondary curriculum a curricular area named *Information and Vocational Guidance* (in the first and second year).

#### **Targeting of services to particular groups**

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<sup>41</sup> Source: Public Policies and Career Development: A Framework for the Design of Career Information, Guidance and Counselling Services in Developing Countries - *Country Report on Romania*, World Bank



As mentioned previously, the targeted population:

- for CCPPAC and ISPPAO are pupils on all levels of pre-university education, parents and educational staff;
- for DG higher education students and graduates; for CEC students with disabilities;
- for CICC all people looking for employment, and
- for INFOTIN youth aged 16-26.

People looking for a job can come to CICC for different reasons: they may be unemployed; they may not be unemployed, but they wish for better jobs; they have a job and wish to keep it; they are young graduates; they intend to change their profession because they are no longer professionally satisfied and/or motivated; they wish to evolve professionally through specialisations, for professional improvement and supplementary qualifications. Rationale for targeting is that each group needs different methodologies and services.

Unfortunately, Law no. 375/11.06.2002 regarding adults vocational training has no special references on adult guidance and counselling, on the need for adults to have access to such services, or specific methods and forms of guidance and counselling needed for adults. However, Art. 2 of the Law states that employers will take all the measures to assure employees conditions to access vocational training and Art 3 of the same Law states that the objective of adult vocational training is to facilitate social integration of individuals according to their vocational aspirations and labour market requirements.

For school children with disabilities that are educated in special institutions, there is a set of tools for psychological use in order to optimise their educational-and career goals. The use of these tools became compulsory according to the Governmental Decision no. 204/26.03.2002.

## **5. Training program for special groups**

### **5.1. Counseling concerning educational paths**

Students make decisions regarding the field and level of their study in pre-university education at the end of last grades (basic schools, secondary education and technical education).

Student may request individual counselling from the CPPAC or the ISPPAO, where qualified personnel exists. There are 42 CPPAC, one in each county. The number of the ISPPAO is known available at county level but not summarized at national level.

The Ministry of Education publishes information on the network of educational opportunities in the formal education system, profiles the admission and graduation requirements etc. in newsletters (printed and online – see <http://www.portal.edu.ro/adlic>) and specialized newspapers.

County School Inspectorates publish an annual newsletter regarding the territorial educational network, the profile of each high school, the entrance requirements, the number of places, the educational content etc.

The Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres, in cooperation with the School Inspectorates, organise annual fairs of educational offers, advertising campaigns in the local, national and international media concerning the educational network, the educational streams, types of courses offered in the various types of educational units.

Students, following their own initiative or encouraged by their teachers or parents, may request individual counselling from the Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres or the Inter-School Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Offices respectively. Some managers understood the importance of adaptation to this change by creating special spaces, including counsellors in the staff, offering them didactic support and introducing educational information. If the school does not have a Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centre, the school administration Board must appoint a teacher responsible with OSP.

This will maintain the connection with CCPPAC and will inform the leadership and the methodical commission of the headmasters about the provided materials. The schools consult with the students' parents and ask them for suggestions regarding the educational and vocational needs of their children.

In vocational and apprentice schools work experience exists as partly integrated in training process. In the first years, the practice training takes place in school lab. In the last years, dedicated to qualification and specialisation, the practice training takes place in enterprises where the students have concrete work tasks. The period of vocational and apprentice schools courses is 2-4 years and 1-3 years respectively.

School counsellors and the teaching staff are also involved in meeting linkages with enterprises are part of the "Counselling and Guidance" curricular area. They can organize (and they are strongly recommended to do so) various types of activities aimed at acquainting children with the activities undertaken in various economic fields of activity. Generally, these activities aimed to informing and acquainting children with adults' work content, are visits to various work places (trade or production units, banks, media outlets etc.), meetings in class with successful professionals from various fields of activity, simulations of work situations etc.

Students who express interest in the possibility of attending a second faculty, obtaining a scholarship abroad, having the opportunity of a training period in the private sector, being employed by certain companies, finding jobs on the Internet area are serviced by the DGs. For example, the DG at Bucharest University provides:

- high school students with information regarding entrance to faculties; information and vocational counselling activities through psychological testing methods; guidance and counselling on-line activities regarding the entrance exam and postuniversity studies;
- students of the faculties with: information regarding the credit system, accommodation regulations, scholarships conferring, library function; guidance activities toward NGOs for students involving in voluntary activities; projects for social integration of the students; and assistance regarding study opportunities in foreign countries.
- offering information, but also offering access to existent on-line information and to labour market supply; students and graduates guidance for consulting the "Occupational profiles"; students guidance toward specialisation and perfection courses; assistance for conceiving CVs and intention / motivation letters; counselling regarding the modalities of finding and contacting an employer and of interview presentation; placement services; a database with students and graduates searching for a job; access to jobs supply that exists on-line; recruitment and selection of those who want to participate to interviews; and support with job interviews with the purpose of placement.

The information, guidance and counselling services are not standardized and they are provided only in big university centres. Study and career services are provided together. The law doesn't stipulate restrictions between career guidance and job placement. Private and public universities can offer guidance and counselling services separately, or together with job placement and graduation recruitment services. Private employment services must be licensed by MLSS.

## 5.2. Counseling concerning occupation selection

As noted previously, Ministry of Education and its subordinated institutions – particularly the Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres and the Inter-School Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Offices, The Institute for Educational Sciences, Houses of Educational Staff, County School Inspectorates – are responsible for producing and disseminating, on national and local level, information regarding formal education and training programs at all levels of the educational system.

The Ministry of Labour and its subordinated institutions – the National Employment Agency mainly through its Career Information and Counselling Centres – are responsible for producing and disseminating information on job opportunities and placement, adult continuous education, re-training on national, county and local level. In reality, this information is not well developed except for formal job vacancy data, nor is it well disseminated or linked directly with education and training data from Ministry of Education. The types and standards for information are not legislated in a special way. Requirements related to accuracy and quality of information is delegated to the various institutions responsible for providing the information.

There are a number of forms that career information takes. The most appreciated and used are: newspapers, leaflets, guides, job profiles, interest and aptitude matching test, evaluation forms, catalogues, CD-ROMs, announcements on job vacancies, video cassettes, information on training courses. Information sources on the Internet increased in number (see Annex 1) some of them designed by governmental institutions.

The types of occupational information developed under the Employment and Social Assistance project are summarized below:

- Editing a **newspaper "A Future for Everyone"** (nine issues have already been published and distributed free of charge; published in several million copies, the newspaper contained basic information on information, guidance and counselling, self-confidence targeted at career development, job seeking techniques).
- Drawing up **450 occupational profiles** (most sought for professions – trades - occupations).
- Designing and printing **16 advertising posters** regarding career counselling; these have been distributed free of charge in schools and other information, guidance and counselling centres and networks.
- Designing and producing **12 videos** on topics relevant for career guidance; the tapes have been distributed to the Information and Vocational Guidance Centres.
- The Centres for Information and Vocational Guidance have been endowed with **1280 TV and 1280 video equipment items** within **460** of each Employment Agencies and with **1050 computers** within **500** for Employment Agencies.
- **Interruptions**, the Canadian test of vocational interests has been translated, adapted and distributed to the Centres.
- **Software for psychological evaluation of vocational abilities and interests** is currently being developed.

A recent<sup>42</sup> study shows that the most used instruments by the counsellors from CCPPAC within the PSO activity are:

In additions to these, specialized guides, occupational profiles, journals / periodicals, books, informative bulletins, presentation booklets (own supply, education territorial network), psychological testing machines, are used. There is an increasing tendency to abandon these

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<sup>42</sup> Source: Public Policies and Career Development: A Framework for the Design of Career Information, Guidance and Counselling Services in Developing Countries - *Country Report on Romania*, World Bank

approaches in favor of using different IT programs and databases that already are available or can be created by the counselor.

ACH	Attention tests
Adaptabilité questionnaire	Paper – pencil tests
Specialized questionnaires for PSO	Intelligence tests (Bontila battery)
Questionnaire for stress	Memory tests
CPI	Personality tests (16PF)
HSPQ	Projective tests (arboreal, family)
RAVEN TVI	Aptitudes tests Interests tests (Holban)

The Resource National Centre for Vocational Guidance – Euro guidance Network has created electronic Agenda for persons, institutions and publications. Agenda has a structure in Microsoft Access with three data bases: persons, institutions and publications. The methods used by CICC are: observation, interview, batteries of aptitude test, interruptions questionnaire, vocational development exercises, sociological questionnaire, SWOT Analyse, Job Fears, Job Clubs, group and individual counselling.

The CICC, CPPAC and ISPPAO draw up materials to inform their clients, publish professional information bulletins for counsellors and organize educational fairs. They also provide information on organize individual or group counselling sessions, provide test and questionnaires packages to identify skills and abilities for those interested. The possibility to investigate certain occupations based on occupational profiles and video materials is also available. Moreover, they invite successful people from various fields to present success strategies. In addition, they offer business consultancy, assistance in drawing up job seeking documents (CV, letter of intention), interview presentation and provide information on relevant Internet-based sources on integration in the labour market.

### **5.3. Counseling concerning work recruitment**

Information on public employment services has already been summarized previously in the report, and these services are provided through the CICC, within NAE, according to the Law no. 76/January 16 2002. Career guidance services are included within employment public services (Art. 58,b). Information and vocational counselling can also be provided by the private sector, according to point 2, Law no. 76/January 16 2002. The counsellors working in the Career Information and Counselling Centres (a network of the Employment Agencies, subordinated to the Ministry of Labour) provide information, guidance and counseling services aimed at finding a job.

The primary focus of the services is information on jobs (at the regional and local level) and on the job seeking techniques, as opposed to provision of general career guidance and counselling services.

The main categories of clients are the following: unemployed, especially long term unemployment, certain categories of disadvantaged (physically disabled people, people belonging to national minorities, Roma, refugees, women, people with reduced capacity to work, people aged over 45), graduates of various levels of education and training that have never been employed, persons wishing to change their job for different reasons, persons who want to evolve professionally through specialisations, perfections and supplementary qualifications , employees experiencing communication and adjustment difficulties in their work environment, etc.

It is not compulsory for all clients to use guidance services. However, those receiving unemployment benefits must register for labor market mediation services, demonstrate they are available for work, and actively look for employment to maintain their benefits.

#### **5.4. Counseling concerning retraining**

Post-compulsory formal education and training opportunities – The educational information is satisfactory at tertiary level and less at basic and secondary school levels.

Concerning the training opportunity for adults, the vocational information is fragmented and badly organized. The educational and training information in CICC from NAE is less comprehensive and not in electronic format. There is little information on non- formal training educational opportunities, and the available information on secondary, tertiary and post-university education in public and private units is not as comprehensive as in developed economies, disseminated widely, or connected directly with occupational information and aptitude and interest assessments.

#### **5.5. Career counseling as a part of national strategy for education, employment and other projects/initiatives.**

The measures that have been taken in Romania in the field of educational policy and vocational training have largely supported the reform process in the previous years, on the attempt to link, on the one hand, the educational and professional training system to the Romanian needs and traditions and, on the other hand, to meet the European standards.

Romania's priorities in the National Development Plan 2004-2006 include strengthening of HRD as a key element for stimulating growth sectors, balancing regional development and addressing social disparities. A more strategic approach to workforce development is supported by measures to qualify and re-qualify the labour force, active labour market measures for youth and long term unemployed, incl. improved planning and evaluation capacities and a strategy that builds on a more responsive education system, improved participation in higher education.

The Ministry of Education information, guidance and counselling networks/services are active in educational guidance area and provide information and counselling of students so that they can get the maximum benefit from educational and training opportunities at both national and local levels. These services also offer psychological assessment for pupils in their final grades to provide them with linkages between their personal aptitudes and interests and the requirements of the labour market.

CPPAC/ISPPAOs provide services related to pedagogical and psychological counselling, career development, skills and interests evaluation, information on the educational national and local network, job searching techniques, job fairs, while DGs develop information, guidance and counselling activities for undergraduates students.

The objective of career information, guidance and counselling services of the Ministry of Labor is primarily dealing with vocational guidance and job placement, and developing individual careers. CICC of NAE are the primary service providers and they develop information, provide guidance and counselling services, assist clients with job search and placement, and organize related vocational training and entrepreneurial education.

The information, guidance and counselling services provided by the Career Information and Counselling Centres are part of the system of active measures and employment policies promoted by the MoL. For instance, Law no. 145/9.07.1998, Law no. 76/16.01.2002, presented at 3.1. NAE implement the politic elaborated by MoL.



The objective of the INFOTIN centres within the framework of NASYI is to offer information and counselling for youth regarding various themes of interest for this age group: access to public information and associative environment, mobility, distance education using ICT, support leisure time activities and social rights of youth, facilitate vocational training and improvement.

## **5.6. Key objectives and goals of national policies for information, guidance and counselling services**

The general picture of the guidance and counselling model functioning in Romania involves:

- Counselling integrated in the educational process (by having the “Counselling and Guidance” Curricular area integrated in the national curricular, mainly as a group activities). All counsellors from CPPAC/ISPPAO have in-service or pre-service training in counselling, but not all the teachers counsellor have some in-service or pre-service training in counselling to help ensure they can do this. Minding the acute necessity for training of the didactic personnel involved in Guidance and Counselling, was open the access of teacher counsellor at continuing training modules from Training Centres (University, CCD);
- Educational and vocational guidance (mainly individual, operated in the County Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres and the Inter-School Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Offices);
- Vocational counselling focused on career development and placement (mainly individual) in the CICC and the Guidance regarding vocational route choice and placement on the labour market Departments (DG).

As mentioned previously two protocols between the three ministries were involved to support cooperation and coordination in development of these services. But, these protocols do not specifically define responsibilities and leadership for agencies involved in different fields (e.g. development and integration of assessments, career information, education/training information).

## **6. Existence of Entrepreneurship (self-employment) element in career counseling programs.**

It should be mentioned that the National Agency for the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises initiated entrepreneurial training programmes that have counselling and guidance components. The measures and the actions undertaken by the National Agency for Small and Medium Enterprises and Co-operatives (NASMEC) and the Ministry of Education - the main responsible factors in elaboration of policies for developing entrepreneurial culture to all levels – endorsed the introduction in the scholar curriculum, beginning with the gymnasium level, of disciplines tied to developing initiative spirit and of professional orientation capacity, as well as the developing of entrepreneurial competences through long life learning.

The initiatives of the Ministry of Education regarding the education and training of the entrepreneurs materialized as follows:

- Elaboration of normative regulations concerning the inclusion of entrepreneurship notions in the basic curriculum of the educational system;
- Realizing alternative textbooks;
- Further participation in the ECO-NET Programme through: revising the legislative framework, organizing seminars for disseminating the concept of “training firm” (for

professors teaching economic disciplines and for headmasters), including, in addition, of seven schools in this Programme;

The Chamber of Commerce also has training components on development entrepreneurial initiative.

As mentioned before, some ad-hoc community initiatives generated by parents, teachers, alumni, local authorities are aimed at placing citizens in the local labour force, encouraging participation in various projects or opening small businesses.

## **7. Associations gathering career counselors.**

*National Association for School and Vocational Guidance (NASVG)* - This is a professional association with interdisciplinary character that organizes actions for school and vocational guidance which is meeting the needs of young people and adults. Its objectives include technical assistance, career counselling, formation, information and research.

*Romanian Psychologists Association.* The goal of this association is to support and promote psychology a science and profession. Among its objectives are: promotion of scientific research, developing standards for the professional including technical competence and ethics, organization of scientific and professional events, etc

## **References**

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- Evoluție și perspective în consilierea carierei, - Ștefan Dajiu, CAE Galați ;
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- Law no. 76 / January 16, 2002, Official Gazette no. 103/2002

## **Annex 1 - Romanian employment and counselling services on internet**

<http://hercules.sibiu.ro/oosp/jobs.html>  
<http://jobtin.infotin.ro/>  
<http://www.1educat.ro>  
<http://www.1job.ro/>  
<http://www.aims.ro>  
<http://www.anunt.ro/job/romanian>  
<http://www.anunturi-concrete.co.ro/>  
<http://www.bestjobs.ro>  
<http://www.bia.ro/8x6/home.html>  
<http://www.bursamuncii.ro>



<http://www.ciocp.ro>  
<http://www.cjnet.ro/n/rlocuridemunca.html>  
<http://www.cotidianul.ro/intermedieri/index.htm>  
<http://www.cvonline.ro/>  
<http://www.ejobs.ro>  
<http://www.hit.ro/>  
<http://www.humanresorces.ro>  
<http://www.job.ro/>  
<http://www.jobs2000.go.ro/>  
<http://www.jobs-consulting.ro/>  
<http://www.jobsite.ro/>  
<http://www.joburi.net/>  
<http://www.locuridemunca.ro>  
<http://www.munca.ro/>  
<http://www.myjob.ro/>  
<http://www.resurseumane.ro>  
<http://www.semm.ro>  
<http://www.siveco.ro>  
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<http://www.wa.ro/jobs.htm>  
<http://www.webinfo.ro/munca/munca.htm>