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**Feasibility study regarding the founding of the national
resource centre for career guidance and counselling in
Serbia and further development of career guidance and
counselling system in Serbia**

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*Feasibility Study Regarding the Founding of the National Resource Centre
for Career Guidance and Counselling in Serbia and Further Development of
Career Guidance and Counselling System in Serbia*



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEGA - Adult Education Guidance Association
BOS - Belgrade Open School
CG – Career Guidance (for career guidance in EU and in general)
CIMO – Finish Centre for International Mobility
CIPC - Centres for Information and Professional Counselling
DES - Irish Department of Education and Skills
EEA - European Economic Area
ELGPN - European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network
EOPPEP - National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Career Guidance
EOPPEP - Greek National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Career Guidance
ETF - European Training Foundation
EU - European Union
GIZ - Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HRD - Human Resources and Social Development Sector
IGC - Institute of Guidance Counsellors
IPA - Instrument for Pre-Accession
LSG - Local self-governance
LYO- Local Local Youth Offices
MoE - Ministry of Economy
MoEST - Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
MoLEVSP - Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Policy
MoYS - Ministry of Youth and Sports
NAEP - Czech National Agency for European Educational Programmes
NAPD - National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals
NCRG - European Network of National Resource and Information Centres
NES - National Employment Service
NRCG - National Resource Centre for Guidance
NVICC - National Vocational Information and Counselling Centre / Euroguidance Slovenia
PLOIGOS - National Database of Learning Opportunities
PLOTEUS - Portal on Learning Opportunities throughout the European Space
ToR - Terms of Reference
VET - Vocational education and training

INTRODUCTION

The awareness that career guidance can substantially contribute to the development of human resources on the national level is in Serbia relatively strong compared to many other countries. Approval of the National Strategy for Career Guidance and Counselling and its Action Plan in 2010 gave strong impetus to the development of career guidance in Serbia. After four years of experience we can notice a lot of changes in career guidance though some important steps still need to be made. After four years the time has come to look back, analyse achievements and make feasible plans for the future development of career guidance system. This is a role of Feasibility Study Regarding the Founding of the National Resource Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling in Serbia and Further Development of Career Guidance and Counselling System in Serbia. A framework contract¹ was awarded for the delivery of the Feasibility Study on January 20, 2014. The primary beneficiary of this framework contract, which lasts until the end of 2014, is the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), but all institutions involved in policy making or service delivery in the field of career guidance and counselling will also benefit.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The timing of this Study coincides well with the 2014-2020 programming of international assistance, mainly through the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA), and the drafting of the new National Strategy for Career Guidance and Counselling and accompanying Action Plan which is to replace the current expiring Strategy. Therefore, besides providing an overview and assessment of the current situation in the field of career guidance and counselling and providing models for a National Resource Centre for Guidance (NRCG), inputs for these two important processes will also be provided on the basis of the findings of the Study. These outputs are well encompassed by the global objective, as defined in the Terms of Reference (ToR) of this Study: to recommend effective and efficient models and solutions for the further development of the career guidance and counselling system in line with European and international standards and best practices.

The specific objectives have been defined as follows:

- to perform an assessment of the current situation and the needs concerning career guidance and counselling system in Serbia;
- to assess the technical and operational capacities of the existing career centres in Serbia and provide comparative analysis of national centres, as well as the analysis of the European models of national resource centres for career guidance and counselling;
- to develop realistic and optimal models for a National Resource Centre for career guidance and counselling in Serbia in line with best EU practices and available lifelong guidance policies in Serbia in the area of education, employment and youth;
- to deliver recommendations for effective measures leading to the further development of a sustainable system of career guidance and counselling in Serbia;
- to facilitate the discussion process and dissemination among relevant stakeholders and decision makers concerning the results of the study;
- to support the preparation of ToRs for the programming of international assistance for period 2014-20, within Human Resources and Social Development Sector (HRD), with special focus on further development of career guidance and counselling system in Serbia.

¹ FWC BENEFICIARIES 2009-Lot 9: Culture, Education, Employment and Social; Europe Aid/127054/C/SEIVmulti

1. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Terminological notice

In Serbia the term *career guidance and counselling* is used in the National Strategy for Career Guidance and many other documents however in some cases *vocational orientation* is still used (Law on the Foundations of the Education System). In this Study we use the term *career guidance* which has been on the EU level agreed as an umbrella term in the field of career guidance² and is used in all documents on the EU level. *Career counselling* encompasses both afore mentioned terms used in Serbia.

The term *vocational orientation* is in this Study used only for the presentation of Law on the Foundations of the Education System and project Vocational Orientation in Serbia financed by GIZ.

1.1. Research Methodology

The methodological approach applied in this Study has been explained in detail in the *Detailed Research Plan* document approved by the beneficiary and EU Delegation in Serbia at the end of February 2014, which may be consulted if need for further clarification arises. The applied approach is grounded in the common international research methodology developed for the purpose of mapping and performing international comparison of career guidance and counselling systems world-wide. This approach provides excellent basis for the identification of the elements of this system in Serbia. Still, it has been modified so as to provide answers to the specific research questions of this Study.

Two basic methods were used to collect the required information: desk research and field interviews.

Desk research

Around 40 documents (please refer to the full reference list provided at the end of this report), including legislation and policy documentation, researches, manuals and other project products, etc. were analysed in order to obtain the information and evidence necessary for the assessment of the current situation and planned future activities. In addition to this, the analysis of EU best practices in the field of career guidance and national resource centres for guidance was conducted on the basis of the rich databases of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network.

Field interviews

Over 50 interviews have been conducted, with representatives of over 30 institutions from six cities/towns in Serbia. The list of institutions includes a wide spectrum starting from policy makers, stakeholders, providers of career guidance services and other organisations with the aim to allow for a holistic understanding of the career guidance system in Serbia and to assess potential institutions for the National Resource Centre for Guidance. On-site visits to career guidance providers were organized in Belgrade, Nis and Novi Sad. For a full list of conducted interviews, please see Annex 1.

The conducted interviews were semi-structured, and assured both 'hard data' on the role of the institution visited were collected, but also the opinion of the interviewees about the strengths and weaknesses of guidance services and the guidance system, their ideas on how to improve them in the future, as well as their vision of the role of the NRCG was sought.

Due to the specifications of this Feasibility study three types of questionnaires have been developed for the following categories:

- 1) *National institutions*: such as ministries, institutions which coordinate or provide support to providers of career guidance services etc. The questionnaire includes elements pertaining to their

² Reference: Glossary of European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN):
<http://www.elgpn.eu/elgpndb/search/metadata/view/190>

role in the career guidance system, the goals of the institution in the field of career guidance, their opinion on the legal bases in their sector, financing of guidance services in their sector, their regular activities, projects in which they are involved and sustainability of project results, target groups and specific characteristics of their target groups, access of services in their sector for various target groups, their capacity for the implementation of the career guidance Strategy, capacities of the providers in their sector (number of staff, competences of staff, time, premises, equipment etc.), monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance system and policy coordination with other sectors.

- 2) *Providers of career guidance services*: such as schools, National Employment Service including CIPC, university career centres, Local Youth Offices etc. The questionnaire includes information on the role of the organisation/service, their goals, financing, target groups and specific characteristics of their beneficiaries, types of career guidance and other services they provide, methods they use, capacities of the institution (number of staff, staff competences for career guidance, staff training, premises, equipment, resources), projects in which they are involved and the sustainability of project results, monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance (including quality indicators).
- 3) *Potential NRCG*: The questionnaire includes questions ensuring insight into the role of the centre and its compatibility with the role of a NRCG, the management system of the centre and its compatibility with the NRCG function, the target groups and specific characteristics of the beneficiaries, the activities of the centre and their similarity with the activities of a NRCG, the methods they use and their similarity with methods of a NRCG, their staff (number, their availability for NRCG functions), their staff's experience and competences and their similarity with the competences required for NRCG staff, their financing system, other available resources compatible with a NRCG function and their projects, mainly those which are relevant for the national level.

The data collected through the desk review and field research were analysed and will be presented so as to provide clear responses to the key research questions defined in the ToR, but also providing a wider EU perspective intended to aid the decision making process of the policy makers in the field of career guidance.

1.2. Process of adopting the first draft of Feasibility Study

The First Draft of Feasibility Study was submitted on 24. April 2014. The emphasis of the First Draft of the Study was on the analysis of current career guidance system in Serbia and on providing relevant and comparable information about EU career guidance policy and experiences of NRCGs in other countries. Recommendations were elaborated to the level which was needed for the discussion on the first draft. After finalizing the First Draft, a wider consultative process was initiated with all interested parties. The Final Draft is the result of feedback obtained from several rounds of consultations with policy makers, project implementers, practitioners, researchers and other experts in the field.

1.3. Structure of the Final Draft of Feasibility Study

As per the ToR for the Feasibility study, the analysis was to focus on two main topics: the career guidance system in Serbia and the national resource centre for guidance. Continuously bearing in mind that the national resource centre of any country is an integral part of the broader career guidance system and as such must be integrated into this system the research has been structured in two tracks. One was focused on the career guidance system as a whole, and the other was focused on the NRCG. Both were analysed in light of EU experiences.

Therefore, firstly an overview of career guidance policy in the EU is provided, followed by an overview of the career guidance system in Serbia including a presentation of the legal and policy framework and the description of the key actors in this field and their main activities and contributions to the career guidance system in Serbia. This system is further analysed in terms of the strengths and weaknesses of the policy, institutions, service providers and training for guidance staff accompanied with a set of recommendations for the improvement of the system.

In the second part of the Study focus is on the specific aspect of this study, the NRCG, which also commences with a detailed presentation of such centres in the EU. The origin and a brief historical overview of the

development of the concept and its relation to Euroguidance centres are provided. This is followed by a detailed account of the contemporary NRCGs in EU member states, including presentations of selected best practices and lessons learnt. Attention is devoted to the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of potential NRCG in Serbia and the provision of recommendations and several phased models which could be pursued in the establishment of a NRCG in Serbia.

Finally, stemming from the research and analysis conducted, input for the future international assistance programming in the form of proposed projects is presented in the final chapter of this Study. Inputs for the development of the new National Strategy for Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia can easily be extracted from the recommendations drawn throughout the document.

2. CAREER GUIDANCE SYSTEM

The term “career guidance system” is in general mostly used as a term which: “... includes provision of career guidance in schools, colleges, universities, training agencies, employment services, workplaces and other community settings” (quotation from ELGPN, pg. 17, 2012). However the Terms of Reference for this Feasibility Study also defines “policy relevant conclusions and recommendations” therefore in this Study we use the term “career guidance system” in its broad meaning which encompass “policy, systems and practices” (ELGPN, pg.17, 2012).

2.1. Overview of career guidance policy in EU

CAREER GUIDANCE POLICY IN EU

The purpose of this chapter is to present recent developments in EU career guidance policy with the aim to offer the policy makers in Serbia relevant information and insights necessary for shaping the future career guidance system.

Career guidance services from traditional to contemporary concept

European policy has been trying to implement contemporary concepts of career guidance and offer the best possible support to their citizens in developing their careers in conditions of today’s often turbulent and unsecure labour market. Various concepts were used in the past in EU member states for the design and operation of career guidance services.

One of the models, in this Study we use the term “**traditional model**”, which has prevailed in some countries, is based on the assumption that an individual makes significant decisions once or twice at the beginning of his/her career when making a decision on the next level of education and when searching for a job for the first time. Consequently career guidance services in practice were provided at certain transition points usually before the enrolment into next education level, though no scientific model from those times really supported such an approach. In the traditional practice, emphasis was on services like information provision and individual counselling, many times accompanied by psychological testing, provided in the particular transition periods. From the professional point of view, the career guidance generally relied on psychology. Another characteristic of traditional concept is so-called “expert approach” which is characterised on one side by the expert role of a counsellor who provides information and gives advice, and on the other side by an individual, who is expected to carry out the advice given to him/her. Such relationship assumes rather passive role of the client as a recipient of the advice and does not provide enough incentives for his/her.

Contemporary concept of career guidance is based on the assumption that career is a permanent development process and that an individual needs special skills to manage his/her career. This approach is an answer to the rapidly changing labour market, a process which commenced long time ago due to globalization, sharp competition, political changes, technological development, etc. Nowadays, regular full-time job is in most countries no longer the prevailing form of employment for youth. Short-term assignments and contracts, work on individual tasks, projects, self-employment, etc., are more frequent employment patterns. An individual has to learn skills to cope with the fact that shorter periods of employment, sometimes followed by the period of unemployment, are not something unusual in one’s career. He/she has to learn how to deal with the experience of being unemployed, to prevent to be pulled into the state of inactivity or social isolation and to use the period of unemployment for additional professional advancement and other activities which will maintain or increase his/her employability. Within such circumstances many times individual does not just “choose” his/her career but actually has to “build” it. In order to be able to do it in the changing conditions on the labour market, an individual needs to acquire new knowledge to be able to understand these changes and learn how to successfully cope with them in the world of work and in life in general. A new concept “*career management skills*” has emerged, referring to the skills, which an individual uses throughout his/her career to:

- identify and assess the possibilities on the labour market, in education, etc.,
- identify and assess his/her interests, knowledge, competences and other personal characteristics,

- compare the first and the second and make a decision on the next career goal,
- apply skills for achieving career goals.

Career management skills can be learned and this concept has very strong impact on the practice of career guidance. Learning is a longer process and should be supported throughout longer time period. For young people in education it means that one of two short interventions (information or counselling session) are not enough, career guidance should be integrated into school life and work either into curricular or extra-curricular activities.

These changes are so significant that we can speak about the change of paradigm in career guidance which has not happened over night, but is a result of a much longer process of transformation of career guidance services. In the beginning of the last decade these changes have received strong support from the EU policy.

EU Policy Framework - Shaping the Change in CG Policy and Practice

European policy on CG is framed in documents such as resolutions, manuals for decision makers, and similar instruments. This aspect of the career guidance is significant for the development of national career guidance system but also for roles and responsibilities that Serbia will take over in cooperation in joint European activities such as Euroguidance network and European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network - ELPGN. These pillars of EU CG policy can have a positive influence on a country's development of the sector. This potential unfolds when different initiatives, processes and projects translate into sustainable system which is in focus of policy makers and fuelled further with experience, knowledge management and advancement. The progress of the system goes hand in hand with the high number of activities in the field of career guidance and this is the reason why many countries have already established a range of programmes, initiatives and mechanisms to support further development.

Career guidance aims to provide support to pupils, students, unemployed and other adults to choose further education and employment. It significantly responds and have influence on a country's employment processes and this is only one of the reasons why after 2004, EU member states have begun to develop common elements of career guidance policy.

Before 2001, career guidance was not in the focus of the education and employment policies on EU level. Only a few EU member states acknowledged its importance in national strategies and other policy documents. Situation significantly changed after the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000. Within those policy processes the career guidance was recognized to be an important mechanism for human resources development, linking closely policies of both education and employment. After that period the role of career guidance within European policy agenda is increasing. Currently career guidance is included in the main EU document for economic and employment policy, named "Europe 2020".

Europe 2020 – Integrated Guidelines for the Economic and Employment Policies of the EU Member States³

Europe 2020 is a framework of the European Strategy for the reforms at the level of EU Member States up to 2020. Career guidance is explicitly or implicitly introduced in all segments of the strategic document. In the part which refers to the economic policy, the career guidance is presented by its results, i.e. *enabling people to envisage and manage changes*. In the part referring to the employment policy, the Guideline 8 specifies that *in cooperation with social partners and businesses, the Member States should improve access to career guidance services combined with systematic information on new job openings and opportunities, promotion of entrepreneurship and enhanced anticipation of skill needs*. In the Guideline 7, it is specified that *the public Employment services should be strengthened and open to all, including young people and those threatened by unemployment. The services must be personalized and targeting those furthest away from the labour market*.

Two most important EU policy documents, specific to career guidance, are:

Resolution on Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the field of Guidance throughout life in Europe⁴

³ Europe 2020 – Integrated guidelines for the economic and employment policies of the Member states (April 2010): <http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/Brochure%20Integrated%20Guidelines.pdf>

This is the first specific strategic document and the first resolution on career guidance that passed in the European Council in 2004. This Resolution pursue introduction of the measures which will significantly step up the development of career guidance services in all member states and enhance their efficiency. It also initiates mutual cooperation and learning and taking a strategic approach to career guidance development in order to achieve permanent results and make lifelong learning possible. From the very beginning of EU cooperation in the field of career guidance, member states are facing difficulties due to different career guidance systems, concepts and terminology. This was the reason why the *Resolution on Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the field of Guidance throughout life in Europe* adopted the common definition of the career guidance:

“In the context of lifelong learning, guidance refers to a range of activities that enables citizens of any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are learned and/or used.”

Examples of activities and institutions providing this type of services are also stated in the Resolution:

“Examples of such activities include information and advice giving, counselling, competence assessment, mentoring, advocacy, teaching decision-making and career management skills. In order to avoid ambiguity, since a variety of terms are used in Member States to describe services engaged in these activities, including educational, vocational or career guidance, guidance and counselling, occupational guidance/counselling services, etc., the term 'guidance' is used throughout this text to identify any or all of these forms of provision and Member States should interpret the term as referring to the appropriate provision in their own countries.”

One of the values of this Resolution is that career guidance and lifelong learning are linked together side by side. Another practical consequence is that the lifelong approach to career guidance increases the number of target groups eligible to career guidance services. Most often the following target groups are mentioned: primary school pupils, gymnasium and VET schools students, tertiary education students, early school leavers (dropouts), unemployed, employed and persons with special educational needs.

The term lifelong guidance does not mean that each guidance provider has to provide services for all age groups. The term refers to the national career guidance system and it's up to national policy makers to decide which provider will serve particular age group.

*Resolution on Better Integrating Lifelong Guidance into Lifelong Learning Strategies*⁵

This is the second resolution on career guidance adopted in November 2008 by the Council of European Union. After the first resolution, the EU Member States started to deal more intensely with career guidance policies, and career guidance became increasingly connected with the lifelong learning. This Resolution *strengthened the role of career guidance within the lifelong learning policies* and the EU Member States were invited to direct their activities towards four priorities to:

- *encourage the lifelong acquisition of career management skills,*
- *facilitate access by all citizens to guidance services,*
- *develop the quality assurance of guidance provision,*
- *encourage coordination and cooperation among the various national, regional and local stakeholders.*

These priorities are very important for the development of any national career guidance system therefore we use them as the criteria for the assessment of strengths and weaknesses of career guidance system in Serbia.

⁴ The first resolution is available at: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?!=EN&f=ST%209286%202004%20INIT>

⁵ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/educ/104236.pdf

ELGPN – From policy to practice

In the period 2008-2011, the governments in most of the EU Member States introduced measures for addressing development of the abovementioned priorities. In order to support these developments and create platform for learning and exchange in 2008, the EU Member States have established the *European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network – ELGPN*⁶, funded by the European Commission. The network, involving at the moment 31 countries, works on the principle of mutual learning. In the beginning the main function of the network was realized through creation of learning conditions for state representatives to get familiar with the models of career guidance services and good practices of the other states. Later the goal of the network was also to provide the support to the development of national career guidance systems and policies and support to European Commission in developing policy recommendations. ELGPN network is also expected to identify effective practices to be fed into the further political process and to pursue priorities of EU Strategy 2020.

Though ELGPN has achieved some other interesting results, we mention only the last major output: *Lifelong Guidance Policy development – A European Resource Kit (ELGPN, 2012)*, a publication which is a synthesis of the previous work. This document has been designed to help policy makers on the national level to shape the guidance system in their countries therefore it was used also in our Study for assessing strengths and weaknesses of CG system.

2.2. Overview of career guidance system in Serbia

2.2.1. THE LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK OF CG SYSTEM IN SERBIA

Career Guidance, in Serbia named Career guidance and counselling (CG), is governed by several laws and rulebooks in the Republic of Serbia and the development of the CG system is addressed through a number of national strategy documents. Mainly, three key sectors are concerned with the career guidance and counselling: employment, education and youth development. Relevant extracts from these legal and policy documents can be examined in *Annex 2*⁷, while this section will bring forward a brief overview and analysis of this framework, demonstrating that currently CG is very relevant issue for a broad range of beneficiaries.

The Strategy for Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia

This Strategy is a key policy document supporting the development and functioning of a CG system in the Republic of Serbia ("Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia ", No. 16/10). It was adopted in 2010 and is valid until the end of 2014, when a new Strategy needs to be agreed to replace it. The development of this Strategy has been guided by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, with the involvement of all key stakeholders. According to the Strategy CG should be provided to individuals of all ages and labour market status. It should be guided by both the principles of labour market: bridging the gap between demand and supply, and the principles of social equality and inclusion: promoting the reintegration of marginalized youth and adults and their activation in the education system and labour market.

The Strategy for Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia establishes the framework for the CG system in Serbia which includes both the employment and the education sectors. Two key issues are mentioned in the context of organizing the functioning of this system: the development of a National Programme for CG which will in fact prescribe the common standards pertinent to the establishment of career guidance centres and the monitoring of their achievement; and the development of a National Recourse Centre for Guidance (NRCG) which is expected to perform overall coordination and development of the CG system, continuously ensuring the employment and education approaches to CG are coherent. Simultaneously, the NRCG has been intended to act as a link between career guidance centres, the labour market and the ministries responsible for CG.

⁶ The Network has its website: <http://www.elgpn.eu/>

⁷ With the exception of the Strategy of Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia ("Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia", No. 16/10) as it would require being annexed in its whole.

An Action Plan accompanies the Strategy, and it outlines four specific goals:

- a) establishment of the career guidance and counselling system;
- b) development of the career guidance and counselling system in the field of education;
- c) development of the career guidance and counselling system in the field of employment;
- d) continuous promotion of career guidance and counselling.

By the decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia,⁸ the Working group for the implementation of the Strategy on Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia was formed in April 2011 with aim to propose measures to harmonize activities for implementation of the strategy and action plan, monitor and evaluate the implementation and report to the Government. This working group was composed of representatives of key ministries: youth, education and labour and employment, finance and economy, and regional development, NES, Chamber of commerce, Standing conference of towns and municipalities and Belgrade Open school and the Conference of Universities of Serbia. The leadership in CG up to the end of 2014 remains with the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

System on CG in education has been introduced in legal framework (legislation on education) and in practice it is promoted in primary and secondary schools and at university level. Special focus is paid to support talented youth. Local Youth Offices play important role in peer to peer approach in career informing. National Employment Service within its scope of work provides CG services through its branch offices and CIPS. Almost 2/3 of their beneficiaries use the available CG services. NES measures and services support and complement the activities of schools, universities, local Youth Offices.

Summary of the implementation of the Strategy for Career Guidance and Counselling

This Strategy is the central strategic document of CG in Serbia therefore we provide the overview of what has been achieved so far. The Strategy is still in the phase of implementation so this is not a complete overview of the implementation. Summary is based on the latest report on implementation of the CG Strategy⁹,

Achievements

- Substantial progress has been made related to the participation of a large number of young people in the CG services, primarily through career information services. It was result of the growing number of providers of career services, primarily Local Youth Offices, primary schools and university career centres that offer CG through different modalities.
- The number of career guidance and counselling centres at universities and faculties has increased and their capacities for work with students are strengthened. University career centres have enriched their work by organizing a program of apprenticeship and established better cooperation with employers (through protocols of cooperation).
- New CIPs have been established within the National Employment Service in Novi Sad and Centres for vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities in Belgrade, Kragujevac and Novi Sad.
- Centre for CG of young talents continued to provide services to Fund for young talents' scholars and the largest coverage was achieved through the services of career information and workshops for professional development.
- Intensified CG activities and services in schools and Local Youth Offices carried out in partnership with ministries, local governments, NGOs and international donors (GIZ project "Professional orientation in Serbia", Smart collective "Youth Business Serbia", BOS – "E-careers", etc.).
- Based on the Agreement between the EC and Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development in 2013 the Euroguidance Centre in Serbia has been founded within the Tempus office.

⁸ Decision 05 No. 02-3148/2011 dated on 28 April 2011 – Official Gazette of the RS no 30/11

⁹ Report on the implementation of the Strategy of Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia for the period from March 2012 to March 2013, MYS, 2013

Activities under the development

- As a part of the project "Careers" Standards of CG for the age group of 19 to 30 are under development.
- Feasibility Study Regarding the Founding of the National Resource Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling in Serbia and Further Development of Career Guidance and Counselling System in Serbia.
- CG Programme and Methodology for the age group of 19 to 30.
- Creation of conditions for the formation of the NRCG,
- Draft protocol on cooperation to be signed by key stakeholders in CG system is planned.

Number of national and international organizations jointly with EU IPA funded projects were actively engaged in implementation of the measures and majority of these measures are represented in this Study.

The **National Youth Strategy** („Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia", No. 55/08) also proposed by the MoYS has also devoted significant attention to CG setting the basis of afore discussed CG Strategy.

The **National Strategy for Employment for the period 2011-2020** („Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia", No. 55/05, 71/05– correction, 101/07, 65/08 and 16/11) makes a direct reference to the Strategy for CG stressing the role CG has in promoting and developing the concept of long-life learning, decreasing the gap between the labour market demand and supply and improving the quality of the labour force, its competitiveness and mobility, as well as social equality and inclusion of youth and adults. The cooperation between key stakeholders is stressed and specific guidelines are provided in terms of recognizing the need for establishing additional Centres for information and professional counselling (CIPC) within the National Employment Service and developing the capacities of their staff, establishing mobile units for rural areas, defining and implementing educational measures for the unemployed and continuously promoting CG. This Strategy is operationalized through an Action Plan which is adopted on a yearly basis.

The key strategy in the education sector is the **Strategy for Development of Education in Serbia up to 2020**, („Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia", No. 55/05, 71/05 – correction, 101/07, 65/08, 16/11, 68/12 - 72/12). The need to introduce and develop the provision of career guidance and counselling is recognized at all education levels and reference to the Strategy for CG is made on several occasions. Most detail is provided in relation to the vision for career guidance in high schools, where it is stressed that teachers and psychologists/pedagogues should be trained in CG in each high school and in the context of adult education, with a primary aim of ensuring labour market participation. The previously adopted (in 2005) **Strategy for Vocational Education in the Republic of Serbia** („Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia", No. 55/05 and 71/05 - correction) envisages that CG shall gradually be developed in vocational high-schools with the aim to aid their students to work and/or further continue their education and should be conducted throughout the high-school programme. A **Strategy for the Development of Adult Education in the Republic of Serbia** („Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia", No. 55/05 and 71/05 - correction) also exists but makes no reference to CG nor professional orientation.

In the past few years several new laws were enacted that set the legal basis for the provision of career guidance to various categories of the population. The **Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance** ("Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia" No. 36/2009 i 88/2010) defines the provision of professional orientation and career planning and counselling as an active labour market measure, which are normally offered to the NES registered unemployed. Already, the **Law on the Foundation of Education System** ("Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia", No. 72/2009, 52/2011 and 55/2013) adopted in 2009 prescribes particular attention to be devoted to the CG of the education system employees and students with an aim of individual development and educational and professional advancement. Recently, a new **Law on Primary Education** ("Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia", no. 55/2013) has been adopted which prescribes that vocational orientation (career guidance), aiming at helping students and their parents (or guardians) select high schools or occupations consistent with their interests and capacities, is provided for seventh and eighth grade students by the teams for professional orientation formed in each school. Similarly, the **Law on Secondary Education** ("Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia", no. 55/2013) defines the same obligation in high schools. Additionally, 11 cross-subject competencies have been defined in the Rulebook on general standards of achievement at the end of general secondary education and secondary vocational education within the general

education subjects, one of which (Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship competencies) involves elements pertaining to CG. The **Law on Adult Education** ("Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia", no. 55/2013) lists career guidance and counselling as one of the activities of adult education. Conversely, no such provision exists in the higher education legislation.

Conclusions on legal and institutional arrangements

In Serbia legal background exists for most of the target groups of users. Overall it can be concluded that the policy and legal framework is conducive to a contemporary approach to career guidance as fostered in the EU. The only category¹⁰ of beneficiaries without direct legal reference are the higher education students.

Although the legal provisions, stipulating that career guidance shall be provided, are in place in all sectors and for mainly all categories of beneficiaries, it does not mean that the services are actually available at this moment as prescribed by the law. This is particularly the case when the availability of career guidance services in the school system is examined, as the following section will demonstrate. Nevertheless, the given legal framework, with the exemption of higher education, is not considered to be a barrier for the provision of CG in Serbia. The newly adopted laws in particular promote the concept and set grounds for a widening pool of beneficiaries.

Nowadays career guidance, particularly in the EU strategic documents, is examined within the lifelong learning agenda, promoting a new approach which envisages guidance as a continuously accessible service for all, and which overcomes the distinction between educational, vocational and personal guidance, and which reaches out to new publics¹¹. We note that the *Strategy on Career Guidance and Counselling* aims at promoting a similar approach to the extent that it considers CG should be available to individuals of all age irrespective of their labour market status, while the *National Employment Strategy 2011-2020* clearly recognizes the role of CG in promoting the LLL concept.

Though legal provision mostly exists, an analysis of the strategic documents shows that in some cases these documents need to be updated and harmonised with the above mentioned approach. For example, the analysis of employment sector strategic documents reveals the approach which limits the provision of assistance to school children for selecting their occupation/educational profile. While this is to a certain extent understandable considering that the beneficiaries of CG services in schools are children and youth who will be soon in the position to make educational choice, the fact is that contemporary CG service provision should be focused on the developing career management skills of pupils and students, i.e. focused on the longer process which is not limited to the point when the decision on next education level should be made. Another example is the *Strategy for the Development of Adult Education in Serbia* which makes no reference to CG whatsoever.

2.2.2. PARTNERS OF CG SYSTEM IN SERBIA

This section includes short description of key partners in CG system, their roles and provision of career guidance services.

The career guidance and counselling (CG) system has undergone significant advancement in the past few years and an increase of attention from key stakeholders. By its nature it is of cross-sector importance. Consequently, the number of actors involved in this field is quite large, as this section, providing an overview of the most significant actors and describing their role within the career guidance and counselling system in Serbia, will demonstrate.

Although the classification of these actors is not straightforward, as many assume more than just one role, we can consider that they range from the policy makers and the state institutions established to support the policy implementation to the service providers themselves. Beside these, a number of independent institutions have been established, which in fact, act as resource centres, collecting information on CG and producing CG

¹⁰ Members of the vulnerable groups have access to guidance services as long as they are included in education system or are registered by NES. Another study would be needed to explore access to specialized guidance services in health and other sectors which are not covered by this study.

¹¹ Commission of European Communities, Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, (2000).

materials and methodologies, training programmes and providing technical assistance to practitioners. Finally, the social partners are valuable partners in the advancement of the CG system and CG provision.

Policy Makers and the institutions which support the policy implementation

Ministry of Youth and Sports

The Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) has initiated the development of the Strategy of Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia and is in charge of monitoring its implementation. The Government of the Republic of Serbia has established the Working Group for the Implementation of the Strategy of Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia and assures it is convened regularly and that the approaches and activities undertaken in the field of CG are coordinated. Up to date the MoYS has assumed the key role in policy formulation and coordination in the field of career guidance. The MoYS has established a Fund for Young Talents supporting the studies of the most successful students, and is supporting the operation of the Career Development Centre for Young Talents (see below). This Ministry has also initiated the establishment of Local Youth Offices and is supporting their work, including their capacity development in the field of career information provision. Several projects were carried out to support schools and Local Youth Offices to provide career guidance and counselling, few were carried out by BOS. Currently strong support is provided by the GIZ project *Professional Orientation in Serbia*, which is providing support to local Local Youth Offices in the period 2011- mid 2015. MoYS also supports the project *Career that Fits Youth - Capacity building of Local Youth Offices for delivery of services and measuring the effects of career guidance and counselling on employability* implemented by the Belgrade Open School.

Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Policy

The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Policy (MoLEVSP) is responsible for the labour market and working life policy. As such it guides and oversees the operation of the National Employment Service. A representative of this Ministry is a member of the Working Group for the Implementation of the Strategy of Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia and assures the career guidance and counselling priorities and activities envisaged in the Employment Strategy and annual National Employment Action Plans, are aligned and coordinated with those of the Strategy of Career Guidance and Counselling. This Ministry is supporting the implementation of the *Further integration of forecasting, monitoring and evaluation in the design and implementation of active labour market policies and adjustment of national classification of occupations to ISCO 08 standards*, IPA 2011 project which should contribute to the further development of the CG system in Serbia.

Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoEST) is in charge of the education policy, and has a crucial role in the process of systematic introduction of CG into the education system. A representative of this Ministry is a member of the Working Group for the Implementation of the Strategy of Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia. Ministry in cooperation with GIZ implements afore mentioned project *Professional Orientation in Serbia* in all of the elementary schools in Serbia.

Ministry of Economy

One of the core spheres of interest of the Ministry of Economy (MoE) is the development of entrepreneurship, and bridging the skills gap between the education system and the needs of the economy. The representative of this Ministry in the Working Group for the Implementation of the Strategy of Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia is intended to assure the development of the CG system is equipped to guide youth towards occupations demanded by the labour market. This Ministry supports a number of projects and initiatives that promote the development of entrepreneurship skills and outlook among school children, most notably: *Junior Achievement*, *Business Innovations Programmes* and the *South East Europe Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning*.

Institute for Quality Education and Assessment

The Institute for Quality Education and Assessment is responsible for the overall monitoring of the quality of education in Serbia. As such it prescribes standards and indicators for their assessment including those related

to the delivery of CG in the primary and secondary education system. These standards also include indicators related to CG.

Institute for the Improvement of Education

The Institute for the Improvement of Education is responsible for developing standards for competencies of all teachers in the school system and for the development of all school books. It is also in charge for the development of standards and indicators for vocational high-schools, including those related to the delivery of CG in these schools.

Foundation Tempus - National Tempus Office, Serbia

The Foundation Tempus - National Tempus Office, Serbia (further referred to as Tempus Foundation) has been established by the key state Universities in Serbia in 1989 to support the reform and modernization of the higher education system. The Tempus programme is an EU programme implemented by this foundation which aims at supporting the partner countries reach the Lisbon Agenda and Bologna Process development trends. The goals of the Programme are to advance the quality of higher education and assure it corresponds to the needs of the labour market and society as a whole, and develop the capacity of the higher education institutions. Apart the Tempus projects, several other programmes are implemented through the aegis of this Foundation, such as: *Erasmus Mundus*, *Lifelong Learning Programmes* (the Euroguidance centre has been established as one of these programmes), *Youth in Action*. As of this year The *Erasmus +* is active which is to support all educational levels, create higher synergy formal and non-formal learning, build stronger links with the labour market and create added value for the European educational space. Additionally, the Tempus Foundation effectively monitors the *CareerS* project (see below).

Resource Centres

Belgrade Open School

The Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling of the Belgrade Open School (BOS), established in 2004, is very active at the level of influencing policy making and policy implementation in the field of CG, in providing technical support to practitioners but also in providing CG services to end beneficiaries. This Centre is an implementing institution or implementation partner in numerous projects including *Supporting VET Schools to Become Leaders of Local Economic Development*, supported by the USAID Sustainable Local Development Project; *Better Public Administration through Internship Placement* supported by the USAID Business Enabling Project and *Career that Fits Youth - Capacity building of Local Youth Offices for delivery of services and measuring the effects of career guidance and counselling on employability* supported by the MoYS and the already mentioned *CareerS* Tempus project through which BOS is to define a national programme for CG for the age group 19-30. In addition to this, BOS has developed the first free online support in CG in Serbia (BOS Careers). Finally, the MoYS has entrusted the BOS to provide CG support to the fellows of the Fund for Young Talents of the Republic of Serbia through the activities of the Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling of Young Talents.

Euroguidance Centre

The Euroguidance Centre in Serbia has been established in 2013 through the Tempus Foundation. It is a European network aimed at supporting CG. This Centre is staffed by two employees and a number of interns who promote the European dimension of CG and provide information on life-long guidance and mobility for learning purposes. This centre aims at supporting both practitioners and policy makers by providing relevant and updated information, descriptions of best practices and opportunities for networking, professional development and mobility, but also direct beneficiaries by informing them about education systems and mobility opportunities in Serbia and in the EU. The development of the Serbian content for the Portal on Learning Opportunities throughout the European Space is under construction.

Inventiva

Inventiva has been established in 2012 and engaged as a key implementing partner for the GIZ *Professional orientation in Serbia* project. The organization plays a key role in introduction of CG in elementary schools, Local Youth Offices and local communities. As a training centre Inventiva provides trainings to teams in each

elementary school and LYOs in Serbia and supports them directly in the provision of professional orientation. Additionally, it supports strengthening capacities of 84 schools to become model centres for professional orientation and leaders in Teams for Professional Orientation (TIPO) whose key role is to create and maintain a network of relevant stakeholders on the local community level and facilitate information exchange and cooperation. Inventiva through TiPO is a driving force for establishment of catalogue and calendar of CG services in local communities. Inventiva's career centre provides direct support to youth and their families. Inventiva is taking over management of the knowledge, experience, expertise and other resources gained through implementation of the GIZ project.

Service Providers

National Employment Service

The National Employment Service (NES) is the public employment service entrusted to provide a wide range of services to the unemployed in Serbia, including professional orientation and career planning. The NES operates through a network of 34 Branch Offices nationwide and additional outreach offices. The NES is represented in the Working Group for the Implementation of the Strategy of Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia.

Currently, a total of 52 psychologists are employed in the provision of these services. The NES offers professional orientation and career planning services in a variety of forms ranging from individual counselling sessions (based also on the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy licensing the majority of NES psychologists have undergone) to Professional Orientation Fairs organized for a wide public, as well as the provision of career planning information, and motivational job search group trainings as well as selection and classification of job or training applicants.

In 2012 4.297 NES beneficiaries were informed about career prospect information. More than double that number, 9.136 have undergone professional orientation and career planning counselling, while 53 per cent of these individuals were active job seekers, and 64 per cent youth (up to 30 years of age). A total of 15.589 NES registered unemployed have been involved in the process of candidate selection and classification for the purpose of employment or to a smaller extent to be inserted into training programmes. 2.560 beneficiaries have participated in the advanced job search training programme - self-efficiency training, which is intended to support hard to place and discouraged unemployed persons and activate them (457 of them were under 30 years of age). Finally 22 professional orientation job fairs have been organized in 17 towns across Serbia involving educational institutions, students, parents and other information providers.

Last year the NES has also additionally improved their Guide for Professional Choices and Career Planning after Primary School and made it accessible online, including a self-assessment kit.

To date, Centres for Information and Professional Counselling (CIPC) have been established in three Branch Offices (Belgrade, Novi Sad and Nis). It is planned that an additional 10 CIPCs will be created through a forthcoming IPA 2012 project, but professional orientation and career planning support is not restricted to the CIPCs. The CIPCs are designed so as to provide up-to-date information and counselling related to the labour market and education. Their beneficiaries may take advantage of self-help information systems and self-assessment tools (personal capacities and professional interests), as well as access the internet and search for jobs. Approximately 4000 individuals benefited from these services in 2012. The CIPCs provide interactive lectures to both elementary and secondary school students and as required perform individual psychological testing and interpretation of results through individual counselling sessions.

Elementary Schools

Career Guidance and Counselling has been introduced into all elementary schools in Serbia through the GIZ project *Professional Orientation in Serbia*. Each elementary school has a team of teachers, school psychologist and pedagogue which have been trained to perform professional orientation to the students of seventh and eighth grade in order to assist them in deciding which high school to enrol into. Professional orientation as a part of school plan and program is provided through extracurricular activities (such as visits to enterprises, encounters with representatives of various professions, etc.) and workshops organized during the "community class hours" (self-awareness, preparation for encounters etc.) or during the classes of specific subjects as cross-

curricular activity. Number of schools is to become model centres for CG and will further support implementation of the programme in other schools through mentorship program and partnership activities. Schools are encouraged to establish, define and offer their own CG services to youth but also to other institutions.

Secondary Schools

Career guidance in secondary schools is to be provided by school counsellors although in practice the extent of provision is limited. VET schools provide real work experience to their students. In selected number of secondary schools, school-counsellors provide guidance services which are supported through various projects and we will mention a few: USAID *Sustainable Local Development project* supporting mobile career guidance teams that deliver career guidance and information to youth in 3 areas (2012-2013); KulturKontakt Austria, pilot project on *Innovation of vocational orientation in primary and secondary schools*, implemented in School Administration Valjevo, within Twinning project of Ministry of Education (2008); number of projects of Belgrade Open School (BOS) which supported teachers and expert associates in significant number of secondary schools for implementation of accredited programs on CG. BOS has also developed a Model of Career Guidance and Counselling for VET in Serbia (2005); joint UN program *Peacebuilding and Inclusive Development (PBILD)* supporting strengthening of youth and entrepreneurship skills in municipalities in South Serbia. In number of towns and municipalities, secondary schools students have access to some career guidance services like career information, „real encounters with world of work”, and peer career workshops. These services are provided in cooperation with Local Youth Offices and students from Faculties at University of Belgrade and Nis through the support of GIZ.

Universities

Career guidance for higher education students is provided through university and faculty career centres. The first such centre, named University of Belgrade Centre for Career Development, has been established in 2006 at the University of Belgrade, which is the largest employing four professionals and one associate. Since then, career centres have been opened also within the University of Novi Sad, University of Nis, University Kragujevac (activities have also been initiated in State University of Novi Pazar) and at the Singidunum and Megatrend private Universities in Belgrade. The University of Belgrade Centre for Career Development supported foundation of other university career centres by organising the initial training in 2007 to transfer the know-how and continuously share best practices and experiences with other higher education institutions interested in establishing or/and developing career guidance services for students.

The services provided by university career centres include career information (printed materials, online information, workshops, dialogue, etc.), career counselling (drop-in or scheduled appointments), career education (student workshops providing support in applications, CV writing, career planning, etc.) and liaising with the business sector (mainly organizing practical work experiences). The services of these centres are available for students, prospective students and alumni alike.

The majority of these University Career Centres are jointly involved in the implementation of the Tempus project *Development of Career Guidance aimed at Improving Higher Education in Serbia –CareerS*. The aim of the project is to improve the quality of career services for students. Specific objectives are:

- Development of Services for Career Information, Guidance and Education aiming to increase youth employability,
- Enabling wider accessibility and variety of programs in CG at Higher Education Institutions,
- Raising the level of recognising importance of CG by the policy makers and other stake holders
- Development of Career Guidance and Counselling (CG) Programme for Young People between the Ages of 19 and 30 (students) and Methodology for CG Centres of HEI.

Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling of Young Talents

The MoYS is supporting the operation of the Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling for the fellows of their Fund for Young Talents. It has been established in 2009, and started operating in 2010. The services provided in this centre are delivered by the specialists from the BOS. Such cooperation is project based and the grant awarded by the MoYS is reaffirmed every 10 months approximately. There are normally three full time employees working in this centre, a career guidance counsellor and trainers that are engaged as necessary. This Centre aims at supporting all of the fellows of the Fund, but most effort is devoted to the new entrants. The services provided include: career information which is accessible to all of the Fund's fellows and includes information on academic advancement opportunities, professional development, professional practice openings, etc.; career counselling is provided upon appointment and up to now 291 fellows have benefited from this, many more should have access to career counselling if the intended online counselling service is established; professional development workshops cover a variety of topics and are aimed at advancing the fellows soft skills and job search skills - 117 workshops have been organized to date, involving 1605 fellows; finally, the centre also cooperates with employers, providing real-work experience and job shadowing opportunities. Lately, a web platform has been developed which allows the fellows to post their CVs as well.

Local Youth Offices

The MoYS has initiated the establishment of 145 Local Youth Offices (LYO) which are formed and financed within the local self-governance (LSG). Most commonly one coordinator is employed full time, while activists and volunteers are engaged with various activities. Around 120 LYO operate in Serbia in the field of career guidance. CG has been identified as a field LYO could provide significant support in. The capacities of LYO to deliver career information have been developed through numerous projects in the past. At the moment, the most significant support is provided through the previously mentioned GIZ project *Professional Orientation in Serbia*. A total of 120 LYO have set up Career Info Corners through the support of this project. The level of CG services delivered in LYO varies in dependence of the capacity of the LYO. At minimum info boards are available for youth, the LYO volunteers further gather information and conduct mapping of the CG services available in their community and make sure this information is accessible to the LYO beneficiaries. The LYO may also engage in organizing real work encounters, peer presentations of high schools (the high school students present the school to the elementary students), support in CV preparation and motivation letter drafting to a broad range of youth including those out of the school system, etc. Finally, some LYO from University cities collaborate with the students of psychology, pedagogy, andragogy or social work as they gain their practical work experience through the provision of CG workshops and support to high school students. Inventiva is providing technical assistance for all levels of CG service delivery.

Belgrade Open School BOS supports and builds capacities of Local Youth Offices for career informing and counselling since 2008 through different projects. The BOS promoted job shadowing as a method for tasting the world of work, usage of ICT in active job search, peer career counselling, peer career counselling with sensitive youth groups, development of career informing services (with focus on internet and social networks as youth friendly media), active collaboration between LYO and other stakeholders like NES branches, high schools, employers.

Private Employment Agencies

Private employment agencies may by law perform all services related to the employment of their clients including CG. Most commonly they are involved in the organization of career guidance fairs, such as Career Days.

Social Partners and Others

Trade Unions

Trade Unions are not actively involved as a provider of CG, and mainly have a role in consulting the process of the CG system improvement, through participation in tripartite meetings. Nevertheless, they have been involved in several projects where they have also contributed to CG, through the provision of basic training in labour rights to school children and in organizing training and re-training for redundant workers and supported their organization into cooperatives.

Serbian Association of Employers

The Serbian Association of Employers is the only representative association of employers in Serbia. Activities related to CG are not included into their regular scope of work, but this association does support CG development, mainly project based, through cooperation with the University of Belgrade Centre for Career Development and Student Counselling, in the Tempus project through the organization of professional practice experience and real job encounters and entrepreneurship training.

Serbian Chamber of Commerce

The Vocational Education Department of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce is involved in activities related to career guidance and counselling. Most notably there is a link with the school system as enterprise visits are organized for school students, and professionals visit schools in order to speak about their occupations. There is good cooperation with the NES and YOs. This department is mostly engaged in organizing vocational training for its members, and is involved in the European Training Foundation (ETF) *FRAME: Skills for the Future* project which works on developing a vocational education and training system with strong links to the labour market.

2.3. Analysis of CG system in Serbia: strengths, weaknesses and recommendations

Analysis of the CG system in Serbia has been carried out in line with the methodology described in Chapter 1 (Methodological framework) of this Study. Strengths and weaknesses presented in this chapter are drawn from findings of the desk research and interviews carried out in spring 2014.

In the beginning of the analysis policy level is presented and followed by analysis of the career guidance services and providers for following main target groups:

- Students in primary education,
- Students in secondary education: general and vocational,
- Students in higher education,
- Unemployed.

Institutions which provide guidance to individuals with special needs have not be included in this study however we proposed a project which aim to improve career guidance for special groups (see Chapter 4: Themes for guidance projects).

Analysis of strengths and weaknesses related to future NRCG centre is presented in chapter 3 (NRCG) of this Study.

2.3.1. CAREER GUIDANCE POLICY

In the field of career guidance policy an impressive progress has been made in Serbia in last few years. The process has started with the adoption of the Strategy for Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia in 2010 and followed by acknowledging important role of CG in other strategies, laws etc. On the policy level following strengths has been identified:

STRENGTHS
<p>Approval of the Strategy Approval of the Strategy and its Action Plan in 2010 gave strong impetus to the development of CG system which is ongoing.</p> <p>Implementation of the Action Plan Strong point on the policy level is also the fact that many activities of the Action Plan have been implemented, or are in the implementation phase. Some activities which have not been implemented (like career guidance programme, NRCG etc.) should be reconsidered before the implementation starts. Important role in the</p>

implementation of the CG Strategy has BOS through various projects and assignments.

Policy support to implementation of career guidance projects in practice

In some cases policy support gave strong impetus to introduction of career guidance in practice.

Enhanced policy coordination

Policy coordination improved on the national level but also on the local level. As a result cooperation of guidance providers on the local level is improved (example are "Tito teams" and local mobile teams for career guidance).

In June 2014 MoYS, informed CG partners about the changes in their policy. Two changes which have an impact on CG in the country are:

- CG for youth (age 15-30) will be integrated in the new National Youth Strategy
- MoYS will cooperate in national coordination of CG but will no longer be the ministry which plays leading role in coordination of National Career Guidance Strategy.

In the time of writing this Study the foreseen absence of the lead ministry can be seen as a potential threat for further development particularly because Serbia is in the situation to plan future IPA and bilateral programmes. However main policy makers in the field of CG seem to be aware of this problem as discussions on the new lead ministry are under the way. We have addressed the issue of leading ministry in section of weaknesses and recommendations.

In spite of some tangible achievements in CG in last few years a number of weaknesses on the policy level have been identified during the preparation of the Study.

WEAKNESSES

Agreement on the new leading ministry for development and coordination of the new CG Strategy

It seems current lack of leading ministry for the new CG strategy is going to be resolved soon to prevent uncoordinated development of CG in future.

Unclear definitions

Some important concepts in the existing Strategy are not clear (career guidance programme, standards, etc.) and this causes certain problems in implementation. In February 2014 the First Draft of "Programme of CG for youth from 19 to 30 years of age" revealed that the term programme refers to standards (requested training and competences), internal standards (learning outcomes of individual client/user), guidance activities and methodology of training for practitioners. All these themes would require more time and resources to be developed and change-management project approach to be introduced in practice. Another problem related to the implementation of these standards is that the access to career guidance services in some areas is very limited.

Too strong emphasis on the role of NRCG

Though NRCG can play an important role in the system of CG in the country, this role is in current Strategy overestimated while the roles of other national stakeholders and institutions are not defined. Analysis of NRCG is presented in Chapter 3.2 of this Study.

Focus of the Strategy on professional issues

The Strategy is too much focused on issues related to CG profession issues (competences, standards, methodology, pedagogical/psychological adequacy of the guidance programmes etc.). It is important that the Strategy includes these elements however many other important strategic issues are not addressed (measures to improve access, etc.).

Gaps in the provision of CG in schools

Career guidance in primary, secondary general and VET schools got insufficient attention in the Strategy

however situation in practice is different. Though not foreseen in the Strategy, MoESTD provides strong support to the GIZ project Professional Orientation in Serbia, as a result career guidance programme has been in short time introduced practically in all primary schools in Serbia. However situation on the level of secondary education is very much different (see section on weaknesses in education).

Training of CG staff

Through various national and international projects several short training courses have been carried out and may counsellors, teachers and other staff, including volunteers, have been trained. These courses are not comparable therefore managers and policy makers have no clear picture what competences CG staff really possess. Training courses are carried out occasionally as part of the projects while no permanent training system of CG staff exists.

Based on findings of the analysis, which are summarised in strengths and weaknesses, further recommendations have been elaborated:

RECOMMENDATIONS

Further existence of career guidance strategy

Existing Strategy for Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia (2010-2014) has served so far as a framework in which national policy makers initiated strategic development of CG in Serbia. After four years tangible results of this strategy can be observed. In current situation it is crucial that policy makers in Serbia develop new cross-sectorial CG strategy for the period after 2014. In line with the *EU Resolution on Better Integrating Lifelong Guidance into Lifelong Learning Strategies* CG strategies in EU member states should have lifelong character, i.e. should assure the access of CG services to all age groups, not just few. Strategy should also contribute to the implementation of employment, social and economic policy goals. Lifelong CG strategy is also the basis for the use of future EU financial resources for the further development of CG in Serbia.

Introduce permanent policy coordination

Existing Policy Working Group has a mandate to monitor implementation of the CG Strategy. This might be interpreted that the group should focus just on the implementation of the current strategy and does not have, during the time of implementation, proactive role in the development of CG system in Serbia. We recommended to policy makers to adopt broad mandate of the working group, i.e. to become the permanent body for coordination of guidance policy. The role of this group should be to coordinate national policy makers (ministries), institutions which are responsible for CG and national and international guidance projects. Through these mechanisms permanent coordination group will have strong impact on CG services in practice and can substantially increase the effectiveness of national and international projects. This group needs sound professional and technical support. We propose that this support is provided by future Serbian NRCG (see chapter 3.3. of this document).

Strengthen the role of policy makers

In line with the weakness defined as "strong emphasis on the role of NRCG" we propose that future CG Strategy clearly defines roles and responsibilities of relevant policy makers and their cooperation.

Enhance national policy development with EU experience

Following recommendation offers solution to the problem of "unclear definition" mentioned among weaknesses. Some concepts and definitions in current CG Strategy are not coherent with those agreed on the level of EU member states. EU policy network (ELGPN) exists for seven years and in this period a lot of experiences and know-how has been accumulated and are available through dedicated ELGPN database (<http://www.elgpn.eu/database>) and through tools such as for example the European Resource kit. Future policy development process can benefit from these experiences and therefore we recommend extensive use of these experiences and tools. The new EU Glossary <http://www.elgpn.eu/glossary> is also an important tool for reducing difficulties and therefore we recommend its use in the future policy process.

Include Euroguidance as an agency which provide support to CG policy development

Though all Euroguidance centres in EU member states follow and promote the national CG policy as a part of

their regular role, their contribution to national CG policies depends on the interest of policy makers for such support. CG policy makers might look at the ways how to strengthen this role.

Focus of future strategy

We recommend that future CG policy takes into account four policy priorities agreed on the EU level:

- assuring access to guidance services to all students, unemployed and other users/clients,
- assuring that career guidance programmes include methods to teach users career management skills,
- assuring high quality of career guidance services,
- assuring that CG policy is coordinated on national and local level.

Engage private providers of career guidance services

Number of CG providers in Serbia engage volunteers to carry out some career guidance activities, mostly information workshops, but do not cooperate with private providers of CG. In many EU member states national institutions tender out part of career guidance provision. It means that some career guidance programmes for unemployed, students etc. are carried out by private agencies which are selected on public tenders on the basis of the staff competence, etc. We recommend to policy makers to explore this way of providing guidance services. In most countries such provision has some advantages: it is not additional burden for the budgets of public institutions, which cannot employ new staff because services are paid from the project budgets, budget for active employment measures or similar sources.

Qualifications of career guidance staff

There is enough evidence to make a conclusion that discussion on to what level career guidance can be provided only by psychologists and what activities can be provided by other guidance staff, which is going on for a long time in Serbia, has not produced any agreement. The result is that there are many training courses provided in Serbia which are not comparable and it is not clear what skills trainees really learn. This hinders the development of training programmes for career guidance. We recommend to policy makers and professionals to consider the option to formalise various levels of qualifications in career guidance i.e. to introduce accredited qualifications for two or three staff profiles working in CG. There are a lot of good examples in EU member states which show how this dilemma can be effectively resolved for the benefit of users, policy makers, practitioners and experts/psychologists.

2.3.2. PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Career guidance in primary schools experienced substantial improvements in the last three years due to coordinated cooperation between MoEST, GIZ (and Inventiva) and primary schools. Improvements are noticeable on all levels of CG: policy, legislation, training of staff, service provision, access to services etc. Though not everything is ideal we did not identify, though requested in ToR, any issue which is worth mentioning as a weakness however a lot needs to be done by relevant national institutions to assure the sustainability and further development of CG in primary schools. The above mentioned project will terminate in 2015 and many activities which are now provided by the GIZ project (through Inventiva) should in future be taken over by relevant education authorities. Though most of the persons interviewed within this Study are satisfied with the project results and believe in its sustainability the experiences from other countries show that such "take-over" should not be underestimated. Transition from pilot project to mainstream activity is usually not easy, therefore in this case we use the term "potential threats" (which can become a weaknesses if not properly addressed and removed).

STRENGTHS

Introducing career guidance through the project

One of the main achievements of career guidance system in primary schools in last three years is the introduction of career guidance in all schools in Serbia. This introduction has been implemented through GIZ project *Professional Orientation in Serbia* with the strong support of MoEST. The project has helped schools and school staff to develop the competences to provide quality CG services to primary schools students and to integrate CG into school life and work.

Regulated legal framework for implementation of the CG in primary schools

The new Law on basic education stipulates obligation of a school to integrate career guidance (professional orientation-PO) into their programmes, assigns team for PO and create a plan for implementation. It is highly appreciated to integrate experiences of the implementation of the programme into the current reform of primary education based on competencies. The new Law provides the very important legal base for future sustainability of PO in primary schools.

Developing local knowledge and experience

Through the support of model schools (model centres for PO) schools have developed competences to transfer the knowledge and experience to the others and to open up for the processes of cooperation between school and support to youth in the community.

School is a part of local CG network

In number of municipalities and towns primary schools have become leaders in gathering together local actors in provision of CG services. Main partners in the communities are NES offices and employers.

Programme on CG in primary schools

Programme implemented in primary schools is process and output oriented, dynamic model which corresponds to contemporary approach in CG and EU practice.

WEAKNESSES – THREATS

Weak implementation of solutions for CG

We mentioned legal framework as the strength of CG on the primary school level however other implementation mechanisms are not as strong as many of partners, interviewed during the preparation of in this study, assume. The plan and programme of the school requires the implementation of the programme in the life of the school. Schools will implement the programme in the future as cross-curricular and extra-curricular activity. Here we provide some examples of implementation solutions which do not seem to be strong enough so far:

- Practices from other countries show that cross-curricular approach to CG is very important but fragile. Due to many other cross-curricular themes there is a risk that career guidance gradually lose its importance and that students do not recognize building the skills which enable them to make decisions independently and manage their career in the future.
- Important part of CG in primary schools is now (GIZ project is still going on) provided within “class-hours” however we found no regulation or other mechanism that these hours can also in future be used for CG.
- Existing quality standards for primary school level mentioned above refer to CG however stronger definitions of CG quality would be needed.

These threats can be removed by some measures presented in the next paragraph (Recommendations).

Dissemination of examples of good practice

Examples of good practice achieved in implementation of the programme should be further integrated in the development processes and documented in materials and tools which will be supported by the Ministry and other respective institutions. The same institutions are to identify mechanisms to further pursue development and implementation of the programme, as well as resources developed so far.

Lack of proper further trainings

Within the PO programme that is implemented so far it is clearly defined that school staff can professionally advance through attendance of the accredited programmes on CG but the training opportunities should be available and accessible to teachers in wider range and in more regulated manner. This is one of the reasons why we propose development of accredited training programmes as one of the themes for future projects (see Chapter 4: Themes for future career guidance projects).

Financial resources and knowledge management

There is a clear need to identify further sources for financing the CG measures in schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking over the lead role from GIZ

The CG system in primary schools has a good chance to further develop on the basis of existing system which is being piloted. However MoEST and other relevant institutions in education sector should prepare the strategy to take over the initiative and management from GIZ once the project is finished. This includes further training of teachers for CG, development of teaching materials, training of teachers in CG, monitoring and evaluation. The local knowledge and model of delivery should be further supported and integrated into local processes and linked with key developmental measures. Centre Inventiva, supported by GIZ so far, as a driving force and a partner in the development of the system can be valuable resource for further development and partner in bigger future projects. It will be recommended for the system sustainability if the MoEST takes over leadership and clearly assigns individuals and respective institutions in further mainstreaming of CG.

Enhance schools own resources

Through development of the model centres for CG in schools, further trainings for schools staff can be provided and materials improved. Representatives of schools CG teams should be involved in policy development processes. Schools should be encouraged to define ways for CG to have more prominent position in the school life.

Active engagement of local communities in supporting students

It would be of great benefit for all CG actors if the local self-governance authorities would support local networking and partnership activities. This cooperation should be formalized through signed agreements on cooperation and recognized in local development plans and in that way financed. The support for this initiative might come from the side of Local Youth Offices that are representatives of LSG.

Developing CG services and methods

Experiences in creation, establishment and implementation of CG services, methods and tools among all stakeholders should be further elaborated, promoted, enhanced and supported for example E-guide for primary school students (Vodič za osnovce – vodič za izbor zanimanja) developed by NES and POIS e-tool (developed by GIZ) for information sharing among stakeholders but also for monitoring of realization of the services

Establishing protocols of cooperation

Protocols of cooperation between key stakeholders in development of the CG system should be agreed as foreseen in the Strategy for the development of CG.

Assure financial resources for provision of CG in schools

Though mainstreaming of CG into school curriculum is financially the most suitable solution, compared to establishing out-of school career services and other models, certain financial resources should be assured to allow further provision of CG in schools.

2.3.3. SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

According to analysed documents and interviews with the stakeholders CG in secondary schools is provided by school counsellors but to limited extent. Several CG projects were carried out in last ten years with the goal to provide training for school counsellors, career guidance services for students, develop career guidance website etc. Some of these projects were finished while some are still going on. Most projects were financed by various international programmes (CARDS, KulturKontakt, Solidar Suisse, USAID, GIZ) and carried out by organisations like BOŠ, Inventiva, LYOs etc. General conclusion is that access to CG services for secondary schools students is, in spite of pilot projects which slightly improved the access, not satisfactory with the exemption of schools which are included in the projects (exemption is valid for the time of project implementation). This and other conclusions are elaborated as follows:

STRENGTHS

Regulated legal framework for implementation of the CG in secondary schools

Law on Secondary Education stipulates obligation of a school to integrate career skills into their plan and programme, assign team for CG, create plan of implementation and enable youth and their families the support in making decision on continuation of education or transition into the world of work.

Slightly increased access to students

Secondary schools especially VET schools do recognize their role in both promotion of the schools and vocations among primary school students and in providing support in the career development to their own students. Number of them is already part of the local networks and developed active cooperation with YOs.

Youth participation

Secondary school students are actively engaged in promotion of CG skills among peers.

LYO

The roles and responsibilities of LYOs depend on their capacities but they have access to youth of different age group, different background and different need for support. Additionally, they generate more and more knowledge and experience in peer to peer support which changes the setting for implementation of CG as well.

WEAKNESSES

CG on secondary school level is a gap in CG system in Serbia

Access of CG services to students is limited and there is a clearly defined need to support further development of the CG system on the secondary school level and to strengthen capacities of schools in provision of CG services. The future programme and measures should be based on lessons learnt from aforementioned projects and initiatives.

Training of school staff

Competencies of the school staff should be further developed to improve the provision of CG services to students.

Use of ICT technology in career guidance

On the basis of desk research and interviews we made a conclusion that ICT technology (use of specialised CG e-databases and e-tools) is not exploited enough in CG in Serbia though some such databases and tools exist.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthening of CG on secondary school level

Based on the model of implementation of CG in primary school level, similar model would be recommended for the secondary school level. Secondary schools should be actively involved in all processes that concern CG developments.

Limited resources

It would be great advantage for schools to develop their capacities to be actively engaged in the development of projects which are taking place in education as well as in youth, employment and economy sectors.

Active cooperation with LYO

Due to the fact that LYOs will have more responsibility in promotion of employment opportunities for youth, better cooperation should be established between secondary schools and Local Youth Offices. The fields of

joint interest might be providing active measures for youth in risk of drop out, vulnerable groups, unemployed youth, peer to peer support, etc.

Use if ICT technology in career guidance

On the basis of desk research and interviews we made a conclusion that ICT technology (use of specialised CG e-databases and e-tools) is not exploited enough in secondary schools for the provision of CG though some such databases and tools exist.

LYOs

LYOs need to build their capacities for provision of CG services and use their position to provide youth friendly services.

2.3.4. STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

University career centres have one main common problem – financing. They managed to achieve a lot within existing resources since their establishment but financial and policy support need to be addressed in near future.

In Chapter 4 we propose the project with the aim to further develop career guidance services in HE. The proposal is based on findings presented in this paragraph.

STRENGTHS

Establishment of university career centres

Establishment of career centres started in 2006 and it was one of the first important steps at that time that these centres for the first time offered students career guidance services, non-existing before. However centres face the problem of limited financial resources which is mentioned among weaknesses.

Good level of cooperation among centres

Centres have good cooperation on the staff level and help each other in mentoring new employees, exchange experiences, etc. thus replacing a lack of resources, formal training, etc.

Participation in common projects

Work in common projects like afore mentioned *CareerS* project offer university career centres the opportunity for professional development, producing information materials, etc.

WEAKNESSES

Limited resources

University career centres operate with very limited resources which is the main barrier to provide better access to CG services. Number of staff in some centres is very low and incomparable to similar career centres in EU member states.

Low access

Though staff of university career centres invests a lot of personal effort to find ways how to improve access of students to career guidance service, like web-services, etc. the access remains low, particularly access to individual counselling.

Lack of professional support

Professional support is currently available through *CareerS* project which will terminate soon. It is important that university career centres gain further professional support (staff training, development of e-tools and other methods etc.) in near future through another project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthen the policy support to the universities

On the basis of conducted interviews we can make the conclusion that universities support their career centres however this support is usually accompanied with minimal resources. Since the introduction the university career centres depend only on universities, which they themselves struggle with financial problems, therefore the sustainability and further development of career centres seems to be fragile. We recommend to policy makers to include career guidance and counselling into strategies of further development of higher education system and consider some support measures which would be included in international and national guidance projects. More cooperation between universities, not just university career centres, on CG is also recommended.

2.3.5. UNEMPLOYED

NES has a long tradition in providing CG services which were in the past mostly focused on students in education. For a long time NES also provide various CG services for unemployed and the plan of the NES management is to further increase the provision of services for unemployed. CG system in NES is elaborated and will further expand with the introduction of the additional CIPS through the future IPA grant. One of the main challenges of CG in NES is how to provide career guidance which would meet needs of unemployed in times of economic crisis.

STRENGTHS

Building on existing experiences and achievements

NES has recently introduced three Career Information and Counselling Centres (CIPC) and some new guidance methods for unemployed, like career development workshops (the new workshop on stress management is going to be launched soon). In near future the new IPA 2012 will become operational which will result in implementation 10 new CIPC centre in NES local offices and another 10 in local self-governance units.

Staff competence for counselling

One of the advantages of career guidance system in NES is good competence level of counsellors for counselling since many counsellors accomplished specialised training in counselling methods. On the other side NES staff needs other competences for improving career management skills of the unemployed (see weaknesses and recommendations).

WEAKNESSES

Distribution of CG staff time

In practice psychologists in NES, unlike to other public employment services in EU member states, use substantial amount of their work time for selection (testing) the candidates for employers. For this reason we propose to NES to focus more on unemployed (see Recommendations).

Ability to offer effective services in hard situation on the labour market

NES, like majority of public employment services, faces the challenge to select and adjust guidance services in such a way to effectively help unemployed to cope with high unemployment and its negative consequences.

Introduction of new technologies

The option which new technologies offer to increase the access of guidance services is not used enough by NES.

CG services for vulnerable groups

CG services for vulnerable groups are non-existing or not updated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Further develop career guidance service to meet the needs of unemployed

Though NES is constantly upgrading their services for unemployed however even more emphasis is needed to develop guidance services which are attractive for unemployed and help them coping with the challenges on the labour market.

Focusing resources on unemployed

In practice psychologists in NES, unlike other public employment services in EU member states, use substantial amount of their work time for selection (testing) teachers to work in schools. We propose NES and relevant ministries (education and labour) to consider this situation and try to find solution to allocate more staff time for provision of career guidance to unemployed. Part of the answer lies in legislation which for example requires selection of teachers before employment.

Further training of guidance staff

Though counselling competence of counsellors seem to be on a good level, additional interdisciplinary training in career guidance is needed, particularly training on how to activate and enable unemployed for coping with the changed situation on the labour market.

Consider sustainability of the new CIPs

NES is currently introducing a number of additional CIPs, job-clubs and other services however the sustainability of these services needs to be addressed in early stages of the project (grant).

Develop career guidance service to meet the needs of vulnerable groups

CG service for vulnerable groups should be either improved or developed.

2.3.6. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF CG IN SERBIA

Quality assurance is also in Serbia an important part of career guidance system¹². Actually it is even more important compared to past due to the emergence of new providers of CG services. Quality is also an issue of policy makers of EU member states which cooperate within European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) shortly presented in Chapter 2.1 of this Study (Overview of career guidance policy in EU). Quality assurance in career guidance is a main topic of the Working Group for Quality and Evidence which operates within ELGPN. In 2012 ELGPN adopted Quality-Assurance and Evidence-base Framework (QAE)¹³. EU guidelines and examples of good practices are also described in publication Lifelong Guidance Policy Development – A European Resource Kit. Various models of quality assurance systems are used throughout EU to assure quality of career guidance services. Only exceptionally one single quality standard exists on the national level which covers all sectors of career guidance provision, the example is Matrix quality standards in UK. In Germany such wide model of quality standard is being developed within 3-years development project which is still going on. In Slovenia another model has been developed. The common cross-sectors Quality Guidelines for CG have been agreed while each sector has its own quality standards for CG. In many countries quality standards are defined within sectors (i.e. separate for education, employment).

Quality assurance mechanisms in Serbia

In Serbia a few initiatives, related to the quality of career guidance system, in various sectors of career guidance have been launched.

¹² This chapter relates to the following research questions in Terms of reference for the Study: What quality assurance mechanisms would be in place for Serbian system of career guidance and counselling? In what ways should standards for career guidance and counselling services for four different age groups envisaged by the National Strategy be specified and put into practice?

¹³ QAE Framework is published in the publication Lifelong Guidance Policy Development – A European Resource Kit, pg. 96: http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/ELGPN_resource_kit_2011-12_web.pdf

In some cases CG standards are included in other standards. First example is *the Rulebook on general standards of achievement at the end of general secondary education and secondary vocational education within the general education subjects* developed by the Institute for Quality Education and Assessment ("Official Bulletin of the Republic of Serbia ", no. 117/2013). Second example is *Standards of the quality of work of educational institutes*, developed by the Institute for Quality Education and Assessment in 2010.

In some other cases CG quality standards are developed within CG projects. The examples are standards which are included in the First Draft of "Programme of CG for youth from 19 to 30 years of age" (project *CareerS*, final draft is currently under the construction) and *Standards for the implementation of professional orientation in primary schools and Local Youth Office* which will be developed by GIZ within the project Professional orientation in Serbia.

Weaknesses

- Though each of these standards has specific goals there is an overlap which is sometimes caused by unclear terminology.
- Fragmented approach: None of existing standards cover all quality elements relevant for CG.
- Policy makers and professionals cannot expect that career guidance providers will implement all afore mentioned standards.

Recommendation

- Future quality assurance mechanism/system should be developed, like in other EU member states, within the future internationally funded CG projects (see Chapter 4.2., Themes for future CG projects, Crosscutting themes).
- Though in Serbia quality of CG provision has been partly included in other sector-based national quality standards (for example in education sector) a common national quality mechanism should be developed to overcome fragmentation of CG quality standards and to assure common framework¹⁴ for quality of CG services regardless the sector these services operate in. Common national quality framework should be accepted in all sectors and should serve as a base for the development of sector-based quality standards.
- Such national quality framework should be in line with the existing European Quality-Assurance Framework.
- All national stakeholders should cooperate in the development of common national quality framework.

Implementation of quality standards for career guidance for four different age groups envisaged by the National Strategy be specified and put into practice

In EU member states quality assurance mechanisms (quality frameworks, quality guidelines and quality standards) are in many cases defined for single target group according to their education or employment status (students, adults in education, unemployed etc.). Only in some cases single CG quality standard have been designed to include wide spectrum of target groups, like in UK for example. There is no evidence, according to available information, that any country would develop quality standards for CG according to the target groups as defined by the National Youth Strategy which distinguishes three youth subgroups: the age between 15 and 19, from 20 to 24, and from 25 to 30.

In Serbia the process of the development of quality standards has already started, as described before, within sectors (for example in education sector). Structuring quality standards according to youth age groups might be in some cases too complicated. Member of the age group 20-24, for example, might be in higher education, they might be employed or unemployed. In such cases it would be difficult to avoid overlaps between age-based standards and sector-based standards. In given situation we recommend to develop broad quality assurance mechanism which will encompass all three target groups defined by the National Youth Strategy and would be coherent with sector-based quality assurance system.

¹⁴ Various terms can be used in this context, for example framework, guidelines etc., i.e. broader terms which can encompass various standards.

3. NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRE FOR CAREER GUIDANCE (NRCG)

3.1. NRCGs in European Union

3.1.1. NRCGs BEFORE 1992 – CONCEPT AND TERMINOLOGY

In EU member states there are two similar terms which refer to the existence of the national centres which are supposed to support career guidance services and policies. These terms are: “national resource centre for career guidance - NRCG” and “Euroguidance centre”. Sometimes these terms are used as synonyms but in some countries there is a clear distinction between NRCG and Euroguidance centre as it will be described later in this chapter.

Before 1992 the concept of national resource centres for career guidance - NRCG was to provide:

- career information on the national level. NRCGs collect, produce process and disseminate career information on the national level with the aim to inform users of career guidance services such as students, unemployed etc. Usually NRCGs collect information on education and training programmes and providers, information on occupations, financial incentives for education and training, vacancies and many other sorts of information related to career development of an individual,
- professional support to guidance staff (career counsellors, teachers and other staff who provide career guidance service). This support might be methodological, providing for example guides, manuals, workbooks and electronic career guidance tools. NRCGs usually also provide resources for professional development of guidance staff: organise trainings or provide information on training and qualification options for career guidance staff, information on other services which provide help to clients, etc.,
- expertise and support to policy makers, including career guidance related information relevant for policy makers. This is rather new function of NRCGs.

This concept, with some modifications, is still relevant. The difference between career guidance centres and NRCGs is also that in general NRCGs do not provide their services directly to the clients in their premises. Their role is to disseminate information to guidance counsellors and teachers which use them in work with the end users (students, parents, adults). Nowadays, NRCGs reach end users also through web-portals and other e-media.

In late eighties, NRCGs from some EU member states started to exchange information and cooperate in the field responding to the European integration process. This bottom up approach and initiative in cooperation of NRCGs was partly funded by European funds. The first network was called *European Network of National Resource and Information Centres – NCRG*. It functioned without any legal framework and sustainable financial resources. By the end of eighties the need for more structural and substantial exchange of information among EU member states NRCGs became evident.

3.1.2. ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF EUROGUIDANCE NETWORK

In 1992, the European Commission took the initiative from the *European Network of national resource centres for guidance – NRCG*, and established¹⁵ the so called Euroguidance network. In fact the NRCGs network has been renamed to the Euroguidance network. At the very beginning, 12 countries took participation in the network: Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal and UK. From the outset, the role of the European Commission was not strong and the development of the network was mainly influenced by the network members themselves. They have implemented a number of various bottom-up initiatives such as joint developmental projects, professional exchanges, conducted respective surveys, established clusters, implemented training projects for guidance counsellors, etc. The network was created within the EU Petra programme to support exchange of data and information on the

¹⁵ Actually establishment of Euroguidance had more phases but detailed description would be too long for the purpose of our Study.

national education and training systems and learning opportunities within the Union, particularly with the perspective on mobility. Later sustainable financial source for the network was assured within the EU Leonardo da Vinci programme (actually “accompanying measure” of this programme). In the period between 2007 and 2013 the Euroguidance network was funded by the new Lifelong Learning programme.

The Euroguidance Centres are designated and co-funded (at least 50% of the budget) by the national authorities often involving an agreement among the Ministry responsible for Vocational training and/or the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education. Another 50% is funded by European source. Organisation of centres and their activities vary and reflect specific national needs. The choice to organise the activities around one or several structures in the country also belongs to the national authorities.

The European Commission provides financial resources for the operation of the network of Euroguidance centres for more than 20 years thus showing that career guidance played and still plays a significant role in the EU education, training and employment policies. The provision of lifelong guidance is recognised as a prerequisite to make lifelong learning a reality for the European citizens. According to the information retrieved from EU website (March 2014), the network includes 34 countries¹⁶. The last one which joined the network was Serbia in 2013.

3.1.3. CONCEPT OF EUROGUIDANCE CENTRES

Common features

All Euroguidance centres in EU member states have common goals and activities requested by the EU.

The general aim of Euroguidance centres is to support internationalisation of guidance and counselling.

The common general goals of all Euroguidance centres are:

- to promote the European dimension in guidance
- to provide quality information on lifelong guidance and mobility for learning purposes

Common Euroguidance activities are:

Goal 1: Promoting European dimension in the field of guidance

- Euroguidance supports national and international networking of guidance practitioners by organising seminars, trainings and study visits on different themes,
- Euroguidance promotes cooperation among different stakeholders in guidance and education,
- Euroguidance supports developing the European dimension in the national guidance systems in cooperation with the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN);

Goal 2: Providing quality information on lifelong guidance and mobility for learning purposes

Euroguidance collects, disseminates and exchanges information on:

- international mobility opportunities,
- education, training and guidance systems in the EU and EEA member and candidate countries,
- European initiatives and programmes within the field of education, training and mobility,
- project results, innovative working methods and good practice in the field of lifelong guidance.

The Portal on Learning Opportunities throughout Europe (PLOTEUS)¹⁷

In 2002, the network commenced a major task to provide the content for PLOTEUS - Portal on Learning Opportunities throughout the European Space. PLOTEUS is the main Euroguidance e-tool on learning

¹⁶ This number refers to the Euroguidance centres financed by the European Commission. Actual number of centres in EU is much higher since one country can have more than one such centre (but European Commission only co-finances one such centre per country). <http://euroguidance.eu/centres/>

¹⁷ <http://euroguidance.eu/services/ploteus/>

opportunities throughout Europe set up as a Europe-wide service, providing information on jobs and learning opportunities and helping citizens of Europe to exercise the right of freedom of movement.

The task of the Euroguidance Centre in each country in relation to PLOTEUS is to identify and classify the relevant regional/national information resources on learning opportunities, and to respond to questions posted by the portal's users. In the last few years, Euroguidance centres closely follow development of European policy through cooperation with the European Lifelong Guidance Policy network - ELGPN and disseminate ELGP results. The main structure of the PLOTEUS portal is presented in Picture 1.

Picture 1: Main structure of Ploteus portal



In a nutshell, PLOTEUS provides information on:

1. *Learning opportunities and training possibilities* available throughout the European Union linking to web sites of universities and higher education institutions, databases of schools and vocational training and adult education courses,
2. *Education and training systems* describing and explaining the different education and training systems of European countries,
3. *Exchange programmes and grants* such as the Lifelong Learning and Youth in Action Programmes,
4. *General information* such as cost of living in European countries, tuition fees, finding accommodation abroad and legal frameworks.

3.1.4. TYPICAL MODEL OF A EUROGUIDANCE CENTRE

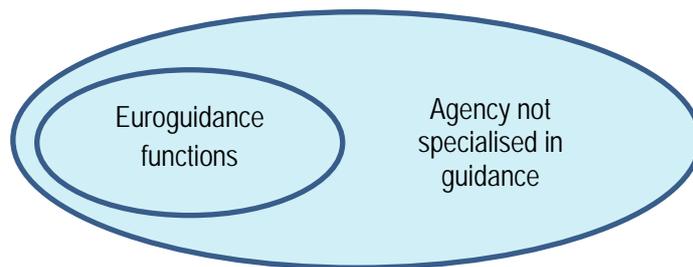
In most countries, Euroguidance centres are organised within organisations¹⁸ which are not specialised for career guidance, therefore they have weak or no connection with career guidance. Often Euroguidance centres are part of the agencies which administer some other EU programmes. In some other countries Euroguidance centres are placed in other institutions (ministries, institutions of higher education etc.). There are many examples of the model and we just mention a few:

¹⁸ In this study we use the term "hosting organisation".

- The Austrian Euroguidance centre operates within the Austrian National Agency for Lifelong Learning,
- The Czech Euroguidance Centre operates within the National Agency for European Educational Programmes (NAEP) which administers Erasmus + programme and some other programmes,
- The Euroguidance Centre in Finland is organized in CIMO – Centre for International Mobility,
- The Croatian Euroguidance Centre is included in the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes,
- The Irish NCGE is part of the Department of Education and Skills (DES),
- The Serbian Euroguidance Centre is part of the Tempus Foundation.

In all these cases Euroguidance centres perform only (or mostly) the role which is defined by the contract with the European Commission (See section “Common goals and activities of Euroguidance centres”). This model is graphically presented in Picture 2.

Picture 2: Euroguidance centres within agencies (hosting organisations) which are not specialised for career guidance



3.1.5. NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRES FOR GUIDANCE (NRCGs) NOWADAYS

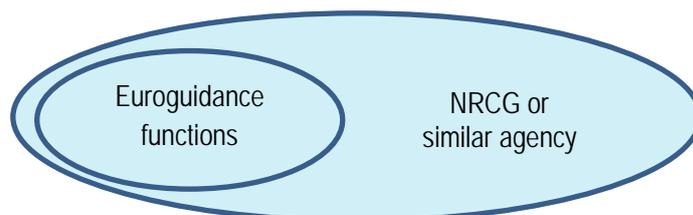
Relationship between Euroguidance and NRCG

In some EU member states Euroguidance centres are also mentioned in the context of National Resource Centres for Guidance – NRCGs. For guidance counsellors, policy makers and others who are not directly involved in these processes the picture of the structure and organization might look blurred since organisation models and terminology related to NRCGs differ from country to country. The purpose of this section is to provide further explanation to avoid misunderstanding and confusion.

Though in the past in many European member states Euroguidance centres replaced old NRCGs in some countries NRCGs still exist and plays an important role in the field of career guidance. Though NRCGs differ from country to country they have many common roles – they have much stronger role in national career guidance centres compared to Euroguidance centres. In most cases Euroguidance centre and NRCG are placed in the same agency: Ireland, Estonia, Italy, Slovenia, Greece, etc. In these countries the term NRCG or variations of this term is used with the exemption of Greece where national resource guidance centre exists within the “National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Career Guidance” - EOPPEP¹⁹ however the term NRCG is not in use.

In afore mentioned countries another organisational model of Euroguidance centres is in place, we could say “Euroguidance within NRCG” model. It is presented on the Picture 3.

Picture 3: Euroguidance centres within agencies which are specialised for career guidance



¹⁹ <http://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/en/eoppep-en>

Types and functions of NRCGs

Career resource centres are organised on the national level and one of the main reasons is the fact that creating large national career information portals (in some cases also national databases) is a long, labour intensive and expensive process which can be done better, more efficient and cheaper if it is carried out on the national level. Nowadays, various national institutions provide national databases (for example databases on schools, universities, occupations, vacancies etc.) thus providing NRCGs an opportunity to inter-link them in user friendly web-portals for career guidance.

NRCGs across Europe differ however no agreed typology of the NRCGs exists in EU, meaning that each NRCG is of the unique "type". NRCGs differ regarding the functions they have, services they provide and regarding the level of support they offer. NRCGs have specific functions in their own countries which largely depend on the career guidance system itself. For example the Slovenian NRCG produces and disseminates occupational descriptions, the function which is, according to available information, not performed by other NRCGs. The reason is that in Slovenia the NRCG is part of the Employment Service of Slovenia and no other institution develops occupational descriptions which are in other countries developed by various other organisations.

In this section we focus on main functions and examples which are the most relevant for the situation regarding establishment of NRCG in Serbia. These functions are as follows:

Providing country specific informational databases

In some cases NRCGs develop and administer specific national databases relevant for career guidance. Slovenian Euroguidance centre for example, which functions within the NRCG Slovenia, develops and maintains e-catalogue of occupational descriptions available on the website: http://www.ess.gov.si/nCIPC/CIPC/opisi_poklicev. The catalogue is used by counsellors and their clients in schools, employment offices, career centres and other career guidance services. Another example is National Database of Learning Opportunities "PLOIGOS": <http://www.ploigos.gr/en/>, administered by EOPPEP, Greek resource centre. Providing (developing, maintaining and promoting) national databases should not be mixed with the role which Euroguidance centres play in the area of career information. National Euroguidance centres are responsible for PLOTEUS databases and mostly not responsible for maintaining large national databases (for example databases of vacancies, educational providers etc.) since it is usually responsibility of the other relevant national institutions.

Providing methodological support

NRCGs can provide resources and know-how for career guidance practitioners: guides, professional manuals, workbooks and electronic career guidance tools for career counsellors, teachers and other staff who provide career guidance services. An example of the instructions, how to use e-career guidance tool

with clients, is available on the website of the NRCG Slovenia:
http://www.ess.gov.si/nCIPC/CIPC/kam_in_kako.

Providing support to design and management of career guidance services and programmes

Another type of methodological support which NRCGs can provide is focused on the developing the entire career guidance programme in one organisation/institution. An example is the resource *the Leading the Guidance Programme* (Resource is partly available on the NCGE²⁰ website: <http://schoolguidancehandbook.ncge.ie/leading-the-guidance-programme>). NRCGs can also develop conditions and rules (standards) under which guidance and counselling services operate.

²⁰ NCGE-National Centre for Guidance in Education in Ireland

Training of guidance staff

NRCGs inform their beneficiaries on training and qualification options for career guidance staff, information about other services which provide support to clients, etc. Some NRCGs have developed their own training function and provide trainings by their own staff. However this is possible only if centres have staff qualified to perform this task. For example, the Dutch Euroguidance centre provides trainings for career guidance staff on “CH-Q” method (“CH-Q” stands for “Schweizerisches Qualifikationsprogramm zur Berufslaufbahn” - Swiss career qualification program). More information on this training course is available on the website of the Dutch Euroguidance Centre: http://cimo.multiedition.fi/eNewsletter4/euroguidance_eng/2011/April/chq.php.

Quality assurance in career guidance

NRCGs can develop specific quality guidelines or quality standards for career guidance. Such an example is the Greek National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Career Guidance” (EOPPEP) which participated in the development of standards, rules and procedures for quality assurance of counselling and guidance services. The standards, based on the National Quality Framework for lifelong learning, are available: <http://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/en/quality-assurance>.

Supporting policy makers

NRCGs usually provide technical and/or professional (expert) support to policy makers. The level of this support depends on the number and competences of NRCG’s staff and on the awareness of policy makers that such support is needed. Support can be provided directly to a particular policy maker or as technical and expert support to some national guidance policy forums/coordination groups. A good example of such support is the Irish National Centre for Guidance in Education - NCGE (<http://www.ncge.ie/about-us/national-forum-on-guidance-2013-14/>). In some member states, like Ireland, Italy and Estonia, governments even go further and designate NRCGs to represent their countries in European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network – ELGPN (in many countries ministries represent their countries in ELGPN network).

These examples show that in some countries NRCGs have very important role in the national career guidance policy. Such support should be distinguished from Euroguidance policy support which is in most cases limited to dissemination of the results of ELGP network.

Implementation of the NRCG functions is demanding and requires financial resources, competent staff, additional expert support etc. NRCGs often implement these roles through participation in national and international projects.

The functions, described above, have strong influence on the provision of career guidance services in each country and on the quality of guidance services. In the next chapter few relevant case studies will be presented with the aim to enable readers to get better picture of NRCGs and ways how NRCGs implement their roles.

3.1.6. NRCG CASES

The Strategy of Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia envisages NRCG as a key factor in career guidance system in Serbia. It should be stressed that NRCGs in EU member states are mostly responsible for the resources and methodological support to counsellors however we have selected and presented few NRCGs which have more important and prominent role in building and developing a national career guidance system. The NRCGs from Ireland, Estonia, Greece and Slovenia are selected to serve as experiences which might support process of decision making on main functions that NRCG in Serbia can take over.

Ireland

The Irish National Centre for Guidance in Education – NCGE, established in 1995 as an agency of the Department of Education and Skills (DES), reports on the achievements to the DES, responsible for education in Ireland. The mission of the NCGE is to develop and support quality guidance provision in the education sector as a part of lifelong learning and in accordance with national and international best practices. Detailed information is available in NCGE website: <http://www.ncge.ie/>.

Activities

NCGE develops guidance materials, provides advice on good practice, supports innovation and pilot projects, disseminates information to practitioners, organises continuous professional development, carries out a range of surveys and related researches on guidance practice and needs, and advises the Department of Education and Skills (DES) on policy development. It also hosts the Euroguidance Centre Ireland and is the designated representative for the DES at the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network. Some activities of NCGE relevant for future NRCG in Serbia are described on following links:

- Training courses for career counsellors <http://www.ncge.ie/research/become-a-guidance-counsellor/>,
- Information on researches in the field of career guidance: <http://www.ncge.ie/resources/research/>,
- Manuals for counsellors and schools: for example the *School Guidance Handbook*, which is an online resource to support the development and delivery of the school career guidance programme <http://www.schoolguidancehandbook.ncge.ie/>.

Management

The Director of the NCGE is responsible for the day to day operations of the centre. In addition to this position, there are five core staff members, including: a Guidance Programme Coordinator, two Guidance Officers, an Information Officer and an Office Administrator. External consultants are engaged to manage accounting procedures, information technology and to assist the NCGE in the delivery of specific aspects of its programme as the need arises.

NCGE reports to the Minister for Education and Skills through its Management of Guidance Committee. The Committee is responsible for the approval of NCGE strategic plans, annual reports etc. System of managing of NCGE is organised with the aim to assure participation in decision making processes of wide range of stakeholders²¹: the Department of Education and Skills (DES), the Adult Education Guidance Association (AEGAI), the DES Inspectorate, representatives of career guidance study courses, the Employment Service, the Higher Education Authority, the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC), the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD) and some others.

Policy support

NCGE is designated representative for Ireland in ELGPN membership. NCGE was chairing ELGPN Steering Group during the Irish EU presidency. On the national level NCGE provides support to the National Forum on Guidance.

Irish NCGE provides useful resources for Irish guidance counsellors and teachers and also publishes NCGE News, a career guidance magazine: <http://twelvehorses.ie/ncge/news-autumn-2013.html>. The centre is active in all areas where as a national resource centre can contribute. The fact that Euroguidance Ireland is also part of NCGE offers the possibility for synergy which can be recognized through the results and achievements of NCGE.

²¹ This approach is very relevant for future NRCG centre in Serbia.

Estonia

The Estonian resource centre with its official title "National Resource Centre for Guidance" (NRCG), operates within the large national educational institution the Innove which has responsibilities in the area of general education, vocational training, lifelong career guidance etc. More information is available on the website of the Innove: <http://www.innove.ee/en>.

The NRCG Estonia has been established in 1998 by the Ministry of Education and Research. Initial mission of the centre was to support guidance practitioners in promoting mobility and the European dimension in guidance. The activities of the Centre were production, collection and distribution of various information and methodological materials (printed and electronic versions), development of the web sites, organization of seminars and trainings on regional, national and international level.

Activities of NRCGs in EU member states vary regarding the level of their participation in the development of career guidance services and guidance policy. Throughout its existence NRCG Estonia has constantly strengthened its role as an important player in the field of career guidance. Particularly impressive is its role in supporting national policy makers and implementing national career guidance projects. Here we provide some more evidences of its development:

- NRCG Estonia played an important role in establishing the *National Guidance Policy Forum* in 2004. At the very beginning of the process, the ground has been prepared to create an assembly of representatives of all stakeholders and policy makers in order to engage them in a co-ordinated development of lifelong guidance in the future. The forum encompassed a wide range of stakeholders, including practitioners, client representatives, employers and institutions from both education and labour sectors.
- In September 2005 the NRCG Estonia was entrusted with the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive national guidance project *The Development of the Guidance System in Estonia*, financed through the EU Structural Funds. An overall objective of the project was to improve the quality of guidance services in order to enhance participation in lifelong learning and employability of all citizens. The project was successfully finished in 2008. Through this project the NRCG Estonia has become the main partner of the Ministry of Education and Research in the process of development of the Estonian career guidance services system.
- In 2008 a contractual agreement to develop guidance and counselling services was signed between the two ministries – the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education. The contract was signed to decide upon the areas of responsibility in provision of high quality guidance and counselling services to the whole population and to promote a unified qualification and training system for career practitioners, unified methodology for career services as well as to assess the impact and quality of the provided services. The activities were put into practice by NRCG Estonia in the frame of the programme *The Development of the Guidance System 2008 – 2013*. The amount given to the development of this field during these years was around 4 million EUR. Accordingly the number of NRCG staff increased to eight employees.
- Important indicator of the role of NRCG in the national system of career guidance is also the decision of Estonian policy makers to nominate the Estonian NRCG as a member in the European guidance policy network-ELGPN.

Estonian NRCG is an example of a centre which has been recognised by policy makers as a centre which can substantially contribute to the development of the national career guidance system. To perform such an important role staff and other resources are needed. NRCG currently employs 19 staff, including 10 for career guidance (relevant ESF programme), 7 for counselling services for children and youth with special needs (psychological, socio-pedagogical counselling, special pedagogy and speech therapy) and 2 for Euroguidance.

Greece

Greek organisation named "*National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Career Guidance*" (EOPPEP) plays an important role in the Greek career guidance system. It plays a role of NRCG although this

term is not used in practice. Greek case is unique and interesting for two main reasons. Career guidance resource centre (including Euroguidance centre) is merged with the national institution for certification of qualifications and EOPPEP has strong legal foundation. More information is available on the web site <http://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/en/eoppep-en>.

The EOPPEP serves as a strong pillar for the actions under the national policy in the areas of counselling and guidance, certification qualifications and lifelong learning. EOPPEP is administrative body for the implementation of the lifelong learning policy and lifelong career guidance policy. Career Guidance services are also part of the National Network of Lifelong Learning as the relevant bodies providing lifelong learning services.

On the national level, EOPPEP is the competent national coordination body responsible to:

- provide scientific and technical support to the relevant stakeholders in the Ministries of Education and Employment in designing and implementing the National Policy on Guidance and Counselling,
- communicate and coordinate actions taken by private and public counselling and guidance service providers, aiming at the improvement of existing services,
- educate, initiate and continuously train counselling and guidance practitioners, in collaboration with/or supplementing those provided by current training services in the relevant Ministries of Employment and Education,
- define conditions and rules under which guidance and counselling services should operate, the relevance and adequacy of counselling and guidance practitioners' qualifications and keeping the relevant registers,
- design and implement counselling and guidance supporting the work of counsellors and of lifelong support of citizens for development and career management,
- participate in the formulation of standards, rules and procedures for quality assurance consulting services and guidance under the National Quality Framework for lifelong learning.

On the European level, EOPPEP is:

- the National Euroguidance Centre, member of the Euroguidance network,
- the national body representing Greece in the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network – ELGPN,

Target Groups benefiting from the EOPPEP's work:

- Counselling and vocational guidance practitioners, career development practitioners in education, training and employment in public and private sectors,
- Public and private stakeholders providing counselling and vocational guidance services in the areas of education, training and employment,
- Interested citizens (school and university students, parents, the unemployed, professionals etc.) that seek information about counselling and vocational guidance services and learning, employment and mobility opportunities,
- All members of the Greek society as potential beneficiaries of quality counselling and vocational guidance services, at regional and national level.

The EOPPEP administers National Database of Learning Opportunities "PLOIGOS" <http://www.ploigos.gr/en/> which was developed in 2009. The database provides information on all educational levels in Greece.

Slovenia

In Slovenia the Euroguidance centre is a part of the NRCG centre. Its official title is *National Vocational Information and Counselling Centre / Euroguidance Slovenia* – NVICC, established in 1999. Both centres function within the Employment Service of Slovenia, a model which is rare in EU member states. More information is on the web site: http://english.ess.gov.si/vicc_ncc.

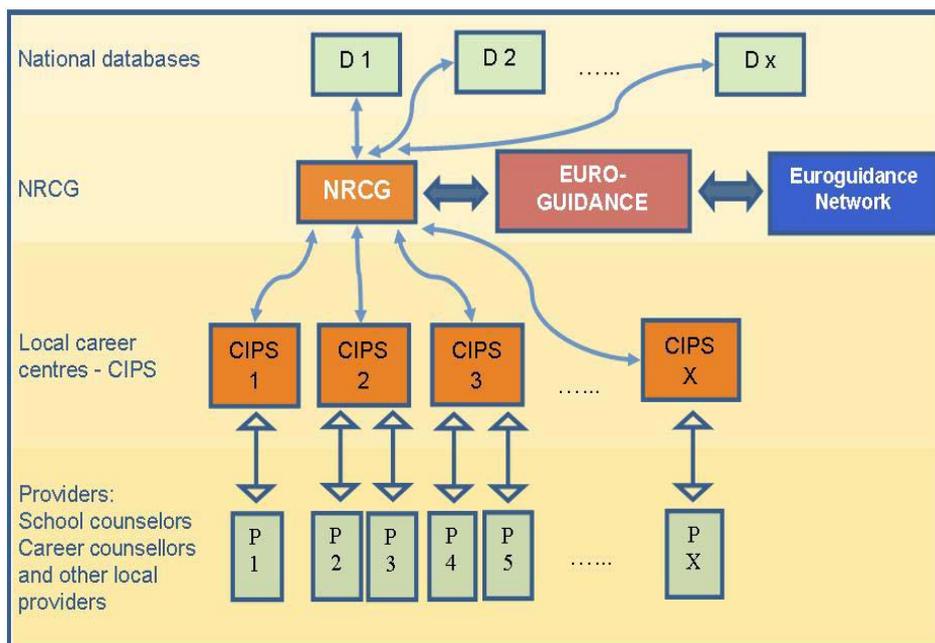
From the very beginning NRCG centre has been designed as a centre which is focused on the provision of resources on the national level while Euroguidance centre is focused on EU dimension in guidance. Co-existing of the Euroguidance and the NRCG proved to be productive model which brings the synergy. Additional synergy was a result of close cooperation between NRCG and the Career Guidance Department of the Employment service of Slovenia.

On the national level, the NRCG has played a role of a central resource centre for career information. The national career information model was developed and regulated roles of the NRCG and the local career centres (CIPC) and flow of the career information. The model, presented in the Picture 4, clarifies the role of the NRCG and is used for:

- developing and updating career information system (databases, information materials, tools etc.),
- the distribution of career information for end users (students, unemployed etc.) through e-communication channels,
- communication and cooperation with career counsellors on regional and local level.

The basic idea of this model is in its effectiveness and efficiency. It is rational to produce part of career information resources on the national level and distribute them afterwards to regional career information and counselling centres (CIPCs). In that sense the function of NRCG is to collect existing information resources (databases) nation-wide and distribute them to the regional CIPC which distribute them afterwards to local career guidance providers (particularly through printed resources). In Slovenia a lot of information is produced on the national level and they concern information on education and training programmes; information on schools, universities and adult education providers, vacancies, scholarships, etc.

Picture 4: The national career information model



The NRCG, in close cooperation with the Euroguidance centre, carries out various other activities:

- expert support for guidance practitioners in employment and education sectors through participation in various EU funded career guidance projects,
- systematically collecting descriptions of occupations, video clips about occupations,
- updating guidance tools such as *Where and How* e-guidance tool, providing manuals for career guidance, organizing trainings of guidance practitioners, study visits and other exchange programs,

- updating and maintaining online PLOTEUS database on education and training possibilities in Slovenia and European Union,
- the Euroguidance Slovenia organizes study visits for European guidance practitioners and also enables Slovenian guidance practitioners to participate in seminars and conferences abroad.

Recently the NRCG Slovenia went through reorganisation processes which brought substantial downsizing of staff and activities. The number of staff decreased from initial five to two employees causing decrease in scope of NRCG's activities. This example shows the importance of the support of policy makers and management of organisation which host NRCG.

3.1.7. EXPERIENCES OF NRCGs – SUMMARY

In this section we provide summary of more than twenty years of experience with NRCGs, having in mind that no agreed classification of models exist in EU.

- NRCGs function only in some EU member states. Existence of NRCG is not an indicator of the development level of career guidance system in the country,
- In countries where NRCGs exist Euroguidance centres are part of NRCG (or both are part of the same institution),
- Roles of NRCGs and scope of their activities largely depend on the needs of career guidance system therefore no single best practice model exists,
- Success of NRCGs largely depends on how well it is integrated into whole career guidance system and to what extent they provide quality support to the national career guidance system,
- NRCGs need permanent strong support of policy makers, through strategic documents and in practice, if expected to play pivotal role in national career guidance system,
- NRCGs should have legal foundation either in legislation or/and bylaws, to prevent marginalising of NRCG functions within hosting organisation,
- It is recommended that NRCGs have explicit role in strategic documents on career guidance,
- Financial resources of NRCGs should be sufficient and stable if possible. Centres which are understaffed do not meet expectations,
- NRCGs should be part of the national organisation which has sustainable status and sustainable funding,
- NRCGs usually show good results if placed within the organisation which works in the field of career guidance,
- Management system of the organisation which hosts the NRCG should be compatible with NRCG's way of work, i.e. local, regional and similar structures are not recommended,
- Development of NRCGs functions is a process. NRCGs which play important role in their countries needed years to develop their functions to the desired level. Systematic development of the staff competences is crucial element in this process.

3.2. Analysis of NRCG in Serbia

3.2.1. NRCG IN CG STRATEGY

The Strategy of Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia (2010) envisage following roles and responsibilities of future National Resource Centre for Guidance:

“In order to ensure the overall coordination and development of the system of career guidance and counselling, it is necessary to work on the creation of conditions for the formation of a national resource centre for career guidance and counselling, which would coordinate and be responsible for the development of the entire system of career guidance and counselling, and would represent the permanent connection between the fields of education and employment within career guidance and counselling. Simultaneously, that centre would represent the link between career centres,

labour market, employers, and ministries responsible for the functioning of career guidance and counselling.

The afore mentioned centre would monitor the implementation of the standards, and coordinate all the career guidance and counselling programmes being realized in schools, faculties, universities, and higher education institutions, NES subsidiaries, other institutions and companies. The centre would also monitor the pedagogical, psychological and professional adequacy of the programmes being used by all the career centres and services in the field of education.

The activities and results of the work of the national resource centre would be evaluated by the competent ministries, National Educational Council, Council for Vocational Education and Training, and National Council for Higher Education. The resource centre at the national level would, in the programming and implementing of the career guidance and counselling system, cooperate directly with the Institute for the Improvement of Education and Upbringing, the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia, representative employers' associations for the territory of the Republic of Serbia, the Employers' Union, local self-government units etc."

STRENGTHS

- Currently future NRCG has strong policy support²² which is materialised in Strategy of CGS in Republic of Serbia,
- Sufficient number of professionals who have requested competences to contribute to the development of NRCG however they work in various career guidance centres in Serbia.

WEAKNESSES

Comparison between the roles of NRCGs in EU member states (see chapter 3.1. NRCG in European Union) and the roles of future NRCG in Serbia, as defined by the Strategy shows substantial discrepancy. NRCGs in EU member states deal mostly with information provision, methodological support, training, support to policy makers, etc. while these roles are not mentioned in afore mentioned Strategy. According to the Strategy, future Serbian NRCG should be focused on coordination and monitoring. These roles have been already challenged in the report of the European Training Foundation "Career Guidance – Development Trends in Serbia" (ETF 2011, pg. 10): *"For instance, the National Career Guidance and Counselling Strategy assigns system development responsibility and coordination to the future national resource centre, despite the fact that such centres in other countries play a more methodological role"*.

Main weaknesses of the NRCG model as defined in existing CG Strategy are:

- Focus on coordination and monitoring role requires substantial resources (high number of staff, staff time, etc.) and would prevent NRCG from performing its basic functions. From the feasibility aspect it would be very difficult for NRCG to implement all those functions²³.
- Monitoring the implementation of standards, professional adequacy, etc. is in conflict with existing roles of national institutions (in education, employment and youth sector) which are responsible not just for the provision of CG services in respective organisations (schools, YOs, local employment offices, CIPCs, etc.) but also for the monitoring and quality of the guidance services.

There is no doubt that, as it is stated in the Strategy, development of career guidance system should be coordinated and that quality of service should be monitored however more feasible ways should be considered to perform these functions as proposed in the chapter Recommendations for the development of NRCGs (3.3.).

²² Such support has to be provided also in the next national CG strategy.

²³ Estonian NRCGs coordinate national project for the development of national CG system (but does not perform monitoring) but employs 19 employees.

3.2.2. ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL CENTRES FOR THE NRCG IN SERBIA

According to the Terms of reference for the *Feasibility Study Regarding the Founding the Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling in Serbia and Further Development of Career Guidance and Counselling system in Serbia* (pg. 7) two main outputs related to NRCG are requested:

- *“A comparative overview of the career centres in Serbia, especially regarding their capacity to be transformed into national resource information centre”*,
- *“Several possible models (optimally three) and clear recommendation for the best possible option for the national resource information centre for career guidance and counselling in Serbia, with the assessment of their strengths and weaknesses, institutional and financial implications”*.

Potential NRCGs

In the Terms of reference, few existing career centres have been suggested as potential centres which could be transformed into NRCG:

- University career centres in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Nis, Kragujevac, Novi Pazar, and University Singidunum and University Megatrend,
- Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling of Young Talents,
- Centres for Information and Professional Counselling within National Employment Service in offices Belgrade, Nis and Novi Sad,
- Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling within the Belgrade Open School,
- Euroguidance centre within Tempus Foundation.

Success of the NRCG does not depend only on the potential of one centre (competences of staff, experience with similar tasks, etc.) but also on the organisation in which the centre is based – for the purpose of this study we use the term “host-organisation”. The host organisation is in fact of critical importance as it is to provide for the much necessary political support which is crucial, and particularly so, in the establishment phase. For example, in the case of university career centres the success of the future NRCG would largely depend also on the University. No NRCG can function out of the context of its host organisation. For this reason both, potential NRCG and the “host-organisation”, have been analysed. Therefore in the analysis we use two sets of pre-defined criteria. First are basic criteria which refer to hosting organisation. Second are NRCG criteria which refer to potential NRCG centres.

Two sets of criteria for the analysis of potential NRCGs

For the purpose of the analysis we have developed the criteria, i.e. a list of factors which are most important and most relevant for the establishment and effective work of a NRCG. The criteria have been developed on the basis of a long term experience with the functioning of NRCGs in EU member states as presented in previous paragraph of this study.

Basic criteria

Basic criteria refer to hosting organisation and need to be met to assure necessary policy support and sustainability.

1. Role of the host and its compatibility with the role of NRCG.

This criterion refers to the level and type of the role. Potential host should operate in the field of career guidance or similar and should perform its role on the national level. This is necessary since all NRCG centres in EU member states have a mandate to work on the national level.

2. Sustainability of the host organisational and financial structure.
Potential hosting organisation should have sustainable organisational and financial structure. Host organisation which is not sustainable cannot provide sustainable environment and support for future NRCG.

3. Management system of the centre/host and its compatibility with the NRCG function.
Management system of the host and the centre is compatible with the management function required for NRCG and should allow that NRCG is managed by NRCG steering or management board.

Criteria for NRCG

Criteria for NRCG have been developed with the aim to see how close their activities are to NRCG, to see which centre has most competent staff for performing NRCG function and to what extent they are compatible with NRCG function.

4. Financing system of the centre is compatible with NRCG function.
Financing system of the host/centre should allow additional financial accountancy for NRCG and is compatible with the NRCG requirements. Ideally centre should be able to provide some resources, like premises, furniture, ICT equipment etc.

5. Projects of the centre, mainly those relevant for the national level.
Centre should provide the evidence of CG projects relevant for the national level.

6. Staff of the centre (their number and availability for the NRC functions).
Higher number of competent staff is the advantage if the centre can assure that relevant employees are available for the NRCG.

7. Competences and experiences of staff of the centre and their similarity with the competences required for NRC staff.
Staff has experience in providing activities which are the coherent to activities of future NRCG (see 3.3.2).

8. Activities of the centre and their similarity with activities of NRCG.
Potential centre/host has experience in providing projects and activities which are the same or very similar to activities of future NRCG (see paragraph 3.3.2).

9. Methods they use and their similarity with methods of NRCG.
Methods used in the centre are similar or the same as the methods used in NRCG.

10. Target groups and specific characteristics of the customers/clients.
Centre has experience in providing relevant CG activities for CG staff, CG providers, users of CG services and policy makers.

ANALYSIS

In the first phase all host organisations of career centres have been scrutinized using basic criteria as presented in Table 1 on the next page. Hosting organisation should meet all three basic criteria to be considered as suitable.

In the second phase centres within host organisations, which passed first phase, have been scrutinised by additional criteria for NRCG (see Table 2).

Table 1: Basic criteria: analysis of host-organisations

BASIC CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING ELIGIBILITY FOR THE ROLE OF HOST-ORGANISATION OF THE NRCG			
Host-organisation: NRCG candidate	NRCG role compatibility	Sustainability: organisational and financial	Management system
Universities: University Career Centres	Universities operate within the field of education and supported the establishment of Career Centres. However a university can't take the role of national institution therefore can't take the role of NRCG.	Universities are sustainable and have secure financing.	Difficult to balance between the management interests of the university and national interests of NRCG which should be steered by steering board (see 3.3.3).
NES Branch Office: CIPS	The NES CIPS are hosted by NES Branch offices (BO). The NES does have a significant role in the field of CG, but the BOs have a local mandate. However NES central office could host the NRCG in which case the Vocational Guidance and Career Planning Unit could play a facilitating role.	The NES is sustainable and has secure financing.	The management of the NES branch office does not have autonomy to manage national institutions like NRCG, this would be possible on the NES central office.
Belgrade Open Schools - BOS: Centre for CGC	BOS plays a significant role in the development of the CGC system in Serbia as a whole. Although established in Belgrade and playing a local role in its initial phases, it has grown to assume a national role and implement projects and activities that have national impact.	BOS depends on external donor project based funding. However it should be noted that it has been operating for over ten years and manages significant yearly budgets. However its status (BOS is NGO) raise some questions regarding suitability for NRCG host organisation.	Operating as a NGO, finding a management model that would fit within the existing management structure would not pose a problem.
MoYS : Centre for CG and Counselling of Young Talents (managed by BOS)	According to the current CG Strategy the MoYS is the lead Ministry in the field of CGC. Although its role might be somewhat lessened in the near future, it will continue to develop the CGC system with respect to youth. By its very nature has a role on national level.	The MoYS itself is sustainable and has secure financing. Centre for CG and Counselling of Young Talents is financed through a budget line within the MoYS but this is not appropriate model since funding is granted only for up to a nine-month period.	The management structure of the MoYS would permit for the establishment of a NRCG within the system using the same management model as in case of Centre for CG and Counselling of Young Talents (but with different financing system).
Tempus Foundation: Euro guidance Centre	Although the Tempus Programme targets students, the Tempus Foundation has been engaged in numerous projects active on the national level and dealing directly with CGC, LLL, CG for high-school students, etc.	The Tempus Foundation is partially donor project funded, but a significant source of funding is secured through the Ministry of Education budget.	As a Foundation established by the Universities of Serbia, an appropriate management structure can be established.

Findings

1. An analysis of this comparative overview demonstrates that significant number of proposed NRCGs function within host organisations which do not have a role on the national level therefore they do not meet first basic criterion, which implies the universal principle that local/regional provider cannot be responsible for managing the national body such as NRCG. No official NRCG in EU member states operate as a part of the local/regional organisation or as a part of university.

- Host organisations which do not meet first basic criterion are Universities and NES Branch Offices.

Consequently all proposed NRCGs, which work within universities and NES Branch Offices, though they work in the field of career guidance, are not suitable candidates for NRCG due to the local/regional role of their host organisation. These centres are:

- University career centres in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Nis, Kragujevac, Novi Pazar, Universities Singidunum and University Megatrend.
- Centres for Information and Professional Counselling within National Employment Service in offices Belgrade, Nis and Novi Sad,

It should be stressed that this conclusion does not mean that potential centres and their staff have no competences required for NRCG, few employees have work experience which are relevant for NRCG.

2. Situation regarding MoYS and Centre for CG and Counselling of Young Talents is very specific.

- MoYS meets basic criteria and can be considered as a suitable institution to become a host of NRCG.

3. Tempus Foundation which host Euroguidance

- Tempus Foundation obviously has NRCG compatible role (it also host Euroguidance) and it also confirmed that its management role is compatible. It manages long-term EU programmes therefore it can also be considered as organisation which provides enough organisational and financial stability to host NRCG (second basic criterion).

4. Belgrade Open School which host Centre for CGC

- Though BOS is financed from projects this financing is relatively stable over years. Taking in account the size of the organisation (around 30 employees, nine departments, around 30 donors) and relatively strong budget, we can consider BOS as sustainable organisation. The only concern is related to BOS is the status (BOS is non-government organisation) but this will be considered in chapter 3.3. (Recommendation).

5. This finding is related to the range of suitable host organisations in Serbia. We can conclude that there are few more host organisations in which might meet basic criteria but are not mentioned in the TOR because mostly they do not have career centres potential NRCGs. However only NES Central Office seems to meet all basic criteria for hosting NRCG and possesses solid level of expertise requested for NRCG. This option will be considered in Chapter 3.3. Recommended model of NRCG in Serbia.

Conclusion

Due to the suitability of their host organisations following potential NRCG centres will be assessed with additional criteria for NRCG (see table 2): Centre for CG and Counselling of Young Talents, Centre for CGC in BOS and Euroguidance centre.

Table 2: Additional criteria for NRCG: analysis of centres which meet basic criteria

Criteria	Centre for CGC within BOS	Euroguidance centre within Tempus Foundation	Centre for CG and Counselling of Young Talents within the MoYS
Financing system	Financed on a project basis and can account for additional funds.	Financed through yearly budget which is partly financed from European Commission (EC), partly from national budget.	Rather insecure financing, dependant on the budget of the MoYS. There tend to be financing gaps of a few months and the when secured the budget often covers only a 9-month period.
Projects relevant on national level	Takes part in numerous projects of national relevance.	Provide activities on the national level requested by the contract with the European Commission. Engaged in additional national projects.	Mainly provides CG services on the national level. Limited involvement in the national projects related to NRCG.
Staff: number and availability	5 staff members: additional staff would need to be hired to carry out NRCG activities of the NRCG.	2 staff members: additional staff would need to be hired to carry out NRCG activities of the NRCG.	3 staff member: additional staff would need to be hired to carry out NRCG activities of the NRCG.
Staff competencies and experiences	The staff has experience in a large variety of projects and activities in the field of CG which are of high relevance to the activities that are to be performed by the NRCG. These range from policy support, to designing national programmes for CG and organising capacity development for CG practitioners.	The staff mainly has experience in information dissemination for policy makers, practitioners and end beneficiaries. Also organise conferences, trainings and similar activities.	The staff mainly has competencies in service provision rather than providing policy level support, or support to the competencies development of practitioners.
Coherence of current activities with the NRCG activities	There is correspondence to a large extent.	There is correspondence to a certain extent.	Low level of correspondence.
Correspondence of methods applied in relation to the role of NRCG	Contemporary approach to CGC.	Contemporary approach to CGC.	Contemporary approach to CGC, but only in service provision.
Target groups/clients	Broad range.	Broad range.	Narrowly defined: recipients of the Fund for Young Talents stipend.

Findings

- On the basis of comparison of projects, activities and competences of the BOS centre for CGC with the requirements of the NRCG we conclude that this centre has the strongest references and the most competent team in relation to the competences requested for the NRCG.
- Although the Euroguidance centre within the Tempus Foundation has only been established in 2013, it has successfully started to perform Euroguidance task. We have already mentioned that Euroguidance function is a part of NRCG function. However, the centre and its staff have less experience in providing activities which are similar to NRCG compared to CGC in BOS.
- Centre for CG and Counselling of Young Talents mostly provide CG services and is not engaged in NRCG related national projects. It serves narrow target groups and has less requested experience compared to CGC and Euroguidance. For this reason we cannot recommend CG and Counselling of Young Talents to be considered as potential NRCG.

Conclusions

The main research question in ToR related to future Serbian NRCG is formulated as: "A comparative overview of the career centres in Serbia, especially regarding their capacity to be transformed into NRCG".

The experiences from other EU member states show that many other factors are important and should be considered before the establishment of NRCG. Effectiveness and sustainability of NRCG depends on the capacities of the centre but also depends on other important aspects which we present in next chapter (3.3.) of this document.

The term "transformation into NRCG" should be interpreted in a broad sense. In each case the NRCG should be "established" not just "transformed" as presented in the next chapter.

- The centres with are most experienced and competent to perform NRCG functions are Centre for CG and Counselling of Young Talents within BOS and Euroguidance centre within the Tempus Foundation.
- In the next chapter the participation of both centres in future NRCG will be considered.

3.3. Recommendations for the model of NRCG in Serbia

The chapter Recommendations for the model of NRCG in Serbia includes all relevant aspects requested in TOR for the Feasibility Study:

3.3.1. Concept of NRCG

The concept defines roles and scope of future NRCG, relation to Euroguidance and target groups which NRCG should serve.

3.3.2. Functions and activities of NRCG

This part provides the answer to question what are the functions and activities of future NRCG.

3.3.3. Establishment of NRCG: Legal, organisational and management issues

All above mentioned issues has strong influence on the decision where future NRCG will be embedded and how it will be organised.

3.3.4. Recommended institutions for hosting NRCG

Few solutions are proposed in this chapter to be considered by CG policy makers before they will make decision who will host future NRCG and what will be its status.

3.3.5. Financial resources for NRCG

This paragraph specifies all items which are needed to prepare the budget for operation of NRCG.

The challenges related to the establishment of NRCG are not limited to the act of establishment. This chapter suggests solutions which can enhance quality of NRCG work, its management and sustainability.

3.3.1 CONCEPT OF NRCG

The concept of future Serbian NRCG, as defined in existing strategy which expires by the end of 2014, is different to the concept of other NRCGs in relevant EU member states (see paragraph 3.2.1. of this document). For this reason a number of consultation meetings were carried out with the beneficiary and other stakeholders in spring 2014 to redefine the role of NRCG. The new concept of NCRG has been confirmed at the consultation meeting with stakeholders on 20. May 2014. Agreed concept of the future NRCG in Serbia is presented below.

RECOMMENDED CONCEPT

The new role of NRCG in future CG strategy

It has been agreed that the role of NRCG should be moved from coordination and monitoring to support to career counsellors, providers of CG services and policy makers through improved information provision, methodological support, training and supporting activities to policy makers, etc. We recommend that future career guidance strategy also strengthens the roles of relevant national institutions in the field of education and employment (see chapter 2.2. Overview of career guidance system in Serbia), which should take over the responsibility for coordination and monitoring of provision and quality of career guidance services in their sector.

NRCG can play an important role in quality assurance but as an institution which participates in the development of the quality standards rather than an institution which monitors its implementation, since this is legal responsibility of other relevant institutions.

NRCG can also have strong role in the development of career guidance system but NRCGs in EU do not coordinate the development of national CG system unless they have been additionally assigned. At present NRCG Estonia seems to be the only example where NRCG implements main European Social Fund project of further development of national CG system.

Euroguidance and NRCG should be part of the same system

Role of Euroguidance centre within the new Serbian CG strategy should be considered as one of the roles of NRCG as it is the case with other NRCGs in EU. The purpose of this recommendation is to assure holistic approach in work of the NRCG and prevent unnecessary fragmentation of the CG system (i.e. separation the role of NRCG from Euroguidance). It is recommended that NRCG and Euroguidance should be part of the same organisation. If this is not possible for any reason NRCG and Euroguidance should be integrated on the programme level, i.e. they should operate within the single work programme.

NRCG for all guidance sectors

NRCG should support career practitioners, provider organisations and policy makers of all sectors: primary education, secondary general and vocational education, university education, youth sector, employment offices and CIPCs, and other sectors which provide career guidance.

Addressing four target groups identified in the National Strategy for CG

According to the ToR the Study should provide a recommendation in what way should future NRCG address four target groups identified in the National Strategy for CG: under 14, 15-18, 19-30 and above 30. NRCGs in EU member states often provide support to counsellors, providers and policy makers from all sectors. In some cases NRCGs, like for example the Irish National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE), specialise on guidance in education sector. In most of EU member states the main responsibility for the development of CG services for particular target group lies within the institutions and providers responsible for providing guidance for particular target group. For example, public employment services have main responsibilities for the provision of career guidance services to unemployed including professional and quality aspects of these services. The same principle applies in education sector where the ministries for education are responsible, usually through relevant national institutions (for example institute for education, agencies for vocational training, etc.) for the quality of guidance. The recommendation is that NRCG should provide support, through information, training and other activities, to providers of services for afore mentioned age groups but in close cooperation with responsible institutions and providers which know the needs of the target groups.

3.3.2 MODEL OF NRCG

The proposed model is based on the assumption that future NRCG will play supportive role and provides services which are most needed from the perspectives of career counsellors, organisations providing career guidance, end users and policy makers. This model is close to models of NRCG in other EU member states.

Functions are formulated in a way which allows the future NRCG to contribute in line with its capacities. For example NRCG should provide a training on guidance issues which are needed by the counsellors but NRCG is not responsible for training provision on the national level since relevant national institutions should share this responsibility.

Proposed roles of and activities of future NRCG are as follows:

FUNCTIONS	ACTIVITIES
Information provision	NRCG produces, collects, processes and disseminates career related information to counsellors and end users. NRCG implements its information role also by inter-linking information on education, training, labour market information, etc. NRCG provides information and implements other activities through its own website and through other relevant websites.
Methodological support	NRCG active role is in developing methods, manuals, workbooks and other resources for individual use or for use in workshops.
Training of CG staff	NRCG should provide training for career guidance staff on the basis of training needs analysis, carried out by NRCG, CG providers or other relevant institutions. This is necessary because NRCG should provide training on CG issues which are not covered by other organisations (internal training provided by CG providers, training provided by CG projects, etc. NRCG might provide training by its own experts and/or by engagement of external experts.
Support to policy makers	NRCG provides support to CG policy in line with the requests of CG policy makers. Activities might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• collection and dissemination of information about guidance

	<p>activities and guidance projects in all sectors (schools, higher education, training, employment), to give policy makers clear picture of the CG provision and to increase transparency of guidance projects,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision of CG related analysis, studies, proposals on the request of policy makers, • provision of technical and expert support to national coordination group for career guidance.
Participate in the development of the system of career guidance and counselling	<p>NRCG participates or leads CG projects which aim to further develop CG system and CG provision in the country.</p> <p>NRCG also supports capacity building of CG providers like schools, various career centres, etc.</p>
Develop or participate in the development of quality standards for career guidance	<p>NRCG participates in the development of specific CG quality standards (refers to development of the standards, training of CG providers, support and consulting to providers). The implementation of the quality standards is the responsibility of the providers of CG services and relevant national institutions which monitor quantity and quality of the work of the CG providers.</p>
Supporting the future CG network through connecting the world of education with the world of work	<p>CG network might be formal (associations, coordination groups etc.) of informal (thematic meetings, bottom-up cooperation and coordination, etc.). NRCG provides support to such networks through provision of information, technical and expert support, etc.</p> <p>NRCG strongly support linking of guidance counsellors and providers with education, employment and youth sector. This support can take a form of meetings, conferences, websites, printed materials, etc.</p>
Promotes EU dimension in career guidance	<p>Part of NRCG work programme is also promotion of EU dimension in career guidance. Promotion is to be carried out through the Euroguidance centre.</p>

3.3.3 ESTABLISHMENT OF NRCG: LEGAL, ORGANISATIONAL AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Before the establishment of NRCG following recommendations should be considered.

RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Legal base</p> <p>Legal base for NRCG is important factor of sustainability though not all NRCGs in EU member states have it therefore we can understand legal base as desired but not as a precondition for establishment NRCG. As a first step, we recommend to CG policy makers to check whether they can assure legal base for NRCG within current processes of changing legal acts. If this is not possible we recommend policy makers to establish NRCG without legal support as described in sub-chapter 3.3.4.</p> <p>NRCG within stable hosting institutions</p> <p>It is recommended that NRCG is organised, if possible, within national institution which itself has stable status and financing. This will prevent negative impact of financial difficulties of host institution on NRCG.</p> <p>Supportive host institution</p> <p>It is recommended that NRCG is part of the institution which has some responsibilities in the area of career</p>

guidance (refers to afore mentioned criteria “compatibility of roles”). This is very important since such institution is genuinely interested for the good results of the NRCG what helps to achieve good effects, also because of synergies with other staff of the organisation. Accordingly, some national institutions might take the role of host organisation, for example Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Participative management mechanism

It is very important that management of NRCG is organised in a way that all CG stakeholders are represented and have influence on the NRCG work-programme. This can be achieved for example through the establishment of special steering board for the NRCG (management board is even better option if it can be agreed with the hosting organisation). Steering board, managing rules and responsibilities of the host organisation should be officially approved and included in the act of establishment.

Composition of the steering board

Representative of major CG partners should be included in the steering board. Main task of steering board is to contribute and agree the programme and annual work plan of the NRCG and monitor whether it has been accomplished. Representatives should be familiar with CG and with the policy goals of their own institutions therefore they do not need to be high officials but people who are in partner organisations responsible for managing CG services and some CG professionals who might contribute to the work of NRCG. It seems the new national coordination group for CG will be nominated soon. We recommend that some members of this group should be nominated also to NRCG steering board to keep the link between policy and NRCG.

Number of staff

To provide roles and services described in 3.3.2. (Model of the NRCG) we recommend to employ five full time staff members.

Establishment of NRCG – first steps

After the Approval of the Feasibility study following steps need to be done to start the process:

- Agreement of policy makers on organisation which will host NRCG
- Including NRCG in programming documents of international donors (IPA or other)
- Hosting organisation participate in the development of project ToR for NRCG (after the approval of respective programming document).

3.3.4 RECOMMENDED INSTITUTIONS FOR HOSTING NRCG

Establishment of NRCG should follow certain procedures which depend on the policy and institutional legal arrangements. In principle NRCG can be established within one the relevant ministries (see next page) but this is longer procedure which in many countries require legal base. Most NRCGs in EU member states function as a unit within relevant national institutions (for example NRCGs in Estonia and Greece are part of national educational institutions while in Slovenia NRCG is part of Employment Service of Slovenia). However there are no rules or requirements on the level of EU which means that the decision on host of future NRCG is entirely on policy makers in Serbia.

The hosting institution should meet basic criteria (see 3.2. Analysis of NRCG in Serbia) but in practice it is also very important that NRCG will be established within hosting organisation where legal and administrative arrangements are less complicated, procedures for establishment additional unit suitable and can be implemented in relatively short time.

OPTIONS

In current situation following options of hosting organisations seem to be feasible:

Ministries

In principle all three most relevant ministries MoYs, MoEST, MoLEVSP could be hosting organisation for NRCG. Experiences from other countries show that, interestingly, no ministry is more suitable than another due to one reason: ministries are dealing with one sector while NRCG should provide services to all sectors. In practice it happens that NRCG focus more on activities related to the sector (ministry) in which it is based thus causing that some partners lose the “feeling of ownership” and start looking at NRCG as a body which mostly serves interests of other target groups. We could say that all ministries have the same disadvantage which is that they are mostly focused on their sector however this problem could be prevented by the introduction of steering board.

Relevant national institutions

These institutions also meet basic criteria for hosting organisation for NRCG. Procedures to establish NRCG as an additional organisational unit seem to be much shorter and more simple compared to procedures in ministries. Once the policy makers agree on such decision only additional unit for NRCG needs to be officially approved what can be usually done in a short time by the management or managing board of the national institution. This procedure has been successfully applied in case of NRCG Slovenia. Among national institutions in Serbia NES Central Office, Department for Vocational Guidance and Career Planning Unit seems to have not professional know-how which could help in the work of the NRCG.

Belgrade Open School (BOS)

Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling (CGC) within BOS already carry out some NRCG activities (developing policy implementation documents, training for counsellors and other CGC staff, national projects etc.). In the chapter Analysis of NRCG in Serbia CGC has been assessed as a centre with strongest HRM potential for NRCG function. However CGC operates within BOS which is non-government organisation and there is no case in EU member states that NGO would host NRCG due to common attitude that centres like NRCG need to be under the direct patronage of various national agencies which will provide necessary support. Since the global objective of Feasibility study is to: “...recommend effective and efficient models and solutions for further development of the career guidance and counselling system in line with European and international standards and best practices,” as the authors of the Study we can't recommend BOS, having in mind that such practice does not exist elsewhere, for hosting organisation of future NRCG. But we recommend other options in which CGC staff will perform NRCG tasks.

Tempus Foundation

Though Tempus Foundation is not a typical stakeholder like ministries or national education or employment institutions it could be considered as a potential host organisation since they already host Euroguidance centre. It has been established by the universities but now successfully runs various EU funded programmes like Tempus projects, Erasmus Mundus, Lifelong Learning Programmes and Erasmus. More information about this option is provided in following paragraph:

Changing context

Since the beginning of the feasibility study situation regarding future CG policy in Serbia has changed. MoYS is, according to the current national CG strategy, a coordinating ministry for CG till the end of 2014. In spring MoYS has announced the change in its policy after 2014 in terms that it will stay important partner in CG policy but will not continue policy coordination role. Currently discussion is going on which ministry will take the coordination role and Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development - MoEST is mentioned as potential future coordinator. In time of writing final version of Feasibility Study the decision on coordinating role is ongoing, the decision has not been made yet, and it is difficult to foresee the outcome of this process. In this situation our

original idea, to develop recommendations for respective partners, needs to be changed. In recommendations we use the term “CG coordination ministry” which refers to the any ministry, existing or new, which will in future take over the coordinating role.

It should be stressed that in contemporary EU policy it is envisaged that all EU member countries and future candidate countries develop their own national CG policies which should be, according to relevant EU resolutions, cross-sectoral and coordinated. Existence of such CG policy is extremely important for any country since it is a precondition for inclusion of CG development projects in future programming documents for IPA and other donors. For this reason it is very important that the discussion about the coordinating role in the area of CG policy finish soon with the decision which ministry will in future take over the coordinating role. Any major delay in this decision making process can have negative impact on future development of CG in Serbia.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommended steps of CG coordinating ministry in relation to NRCG

We recommend to CG coordination ministry to undertake further steps:

- decide in close cooperation with CG policy partners the hosting organisation for NRCG,
- include establishment of future NRCG in its part of programming document, (this is the only activity which needs to be done in very short time, all other can be carried out later),
- establish steering board for the NRCG,
- establish NRCG in close cooperation with other CG policy partners.

The first step, decision on the hosting organisation, is further elaborated below since it seems to be very complex in current situation.

- It is recommended that the decision on hosting organisation should wait for the future CG coordination ministry, which should make this decision together with relevant CG national partners.
- Explore possibilities for establishing NRCG within the sector of future CG coordination ministry or relevant institutions within this sector. In this process legal department of CG coordination ministry should be consulted. While establishment within any ministry seems to be complex and long process, like in other EU member states, the option to establish it with one of relevant national institutions should be easier.

Recommend solution for NRCG hosting institution

In given circumstances it is difficult to recommend the best solution for concrete hosting organisation since it largely depends on the future developments. However we elaborated a recommendations which seems to be universal, i.e. could be applied in different future situations.

- We recommend to policy makers to establish NRCG within Tempus Foundation which will sub-contract NRCG activities to the organisation with best references and most competent staff.

The advantages of this solution are:

- Meets basic criteria for host organisation.
- Its status as an institution which already host other EU programmes makes Tempus Foundation legitimate status to host NRCG.
- The Tempus Foundation has established procedure and experience in adding new programmes.

- Procedures for establishment are relatively straightforward.
- Management of the organisation is flexible.
- It will allow subcontracting of NRCG programme (activities) to organisation which is most competent to perform NRCG task.
- It could include Euroguidance and NRCG under one roof thus allowing for better cooperation and synergy.
- In 2015 Tempus Foundation will take the role of representing Serbia in European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). This role has been delegated to Tempus Foundation by relevant ministries. Future NRCG should provide also support to National ELGPN team. Coordination of all these functions (Euroguidance, NRCG and ELGPN) under one roof could be easier and could bring synergy.

Disadvantage:

- The only potential disadvantage is that Tempus Foundation is not one of the strongest national partners in career guidance and therefore might not have genuine interest in CG. But this is not really necessary because future NRCG should anyway steered by steering board in which main national CG partners are represented.

3.3.5 FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR THE NRCG

- This sub-chapter specifies all items which are needed to prepare the budget for operation of NRCG.
- NRCG can operate in usual office space therefore no costs for eventual reconstruction/adaptation of the premises has been envisaged.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Types of resources

According to the ToR the Study should provide: "realistic solutions also for needed human resources, facilities, needed equipment, instruments, etc." List of resources which we provide below allows easy calculation of cost for NRCG.

Staff salaries

Financial resources for the 5 staff members. According to the Model of the NRCG (see 3.3.2.) NRCG will occasionally also need to outsource trainers and experts but this type of cost come under Programme costs.

Offices

Total recommended size of NRCG offices is 90-100 m² which includes:

- Usual office space for 5 employees
- Meeting/training room for 15 people which is at the same time open-space library
- Storage room (small office room) for information materials
- Toilets
- Running costs (heating, electricity, water, cleaning etc.)

Office furniture

Usual office furniture can be purchased:

- 8 office table
- 20 office chairs
- 7 cupboards

- 5 book-shelves (for information and promotion materials)
- flip chart

ICT equipment

- 6 office PCs or laptops (at least one should be laptop for presentations)
- 2 printers
- 1 big monitor for meeting room
- 1 beamer
- 1 still-picture camera
- 1 video camera

(No servers or other extra ICT equipment are needed in the beginning unless NRCG is going to take over the responsibility for maintaining large national databases).

Programme costs

In this paragraph we provide types of costs related to the NRCG work programme. It is foreseen that NRCG will be established with the financial support of international project therefore we can expect that large proportion of programme costs will be covered by the project. Precise costs related to implementation of work programme can be calculated when NRCG produces first annual work plan and/or when the project budget is known.

Programme related costs at least cover:

- creation and distribution of information materials
- creation and distribution of promotional materials and organisation of events
- costs of analysis, studies and similar outsourced tasks
- participation at education, employment or career fairs
- organisation or participation at conferences and other relevant events
- trainings for CG practitioners (if NRCG will hire external trainers and experts)

Staff development

NRCG is expected to provide services on a high professional level therefore resource for staff development should be allocated in the budget like:

- Purchase of professional resources (books, manuals, video courses, tests and other CG tools)
- Participation in professional training
- Participation in professional events (conferences, etc.)

We propose to establish future NRCG through the project within one of the international aid programmes (see Chapter 4, NRCG).

4. THEMES FOR FUTURE CAREER GUIDANCE PROJECTS

4.1. Context

Within this chapter we present a list of themes to be considered in discussions and planning of future career guidance projects. These themes are drawn from the interviews which project team conducted with key career guidance stakeholders in Serbia as a part of the Feasibility Study (see annex 1: The list of conducted interviews) and further elaborated by project team. Some themes are defined broadly since they should be first discussed and elaborated by relevant institutions and stakeholders.

The list presents mapping of the themes based on the three sectors that are currently prevailing in the CG field in Serbia: education, youth and employment. Additionally the crosscutting themes are presented i.e. themes relevant for the CG services regardless the sector in which they operate. These crosscutting themes correspond to the crosscutting themes of EU career guidance policy. Besides collecting ideas which have been already discussed in the past, some themes are added which can further strengthen capacities of the system to be more efficient and effective.

It is expected that these themes will be considered within future holistic strategic planning of career guidance system:

- planning of the new career guidance strategy,
- planning of the new IPA programming period 2014-2020,
- planning of projects with other donors (bilateral cooperation, etc.).

We propose that, within above listed planning processes, also other recommendations of Feasibility Study are discussed.

4.2. Themes of future projects

CROSSCUTTING THEMES
<p>NRCG</p> <p>It is feasible that development of the future NRCG in Serbia should be implemented through a project financed by one of the international donor programmes. We propose two years project. NRCG should function in line with the model (concept, roles, activities) and legal, organisational and management recommendations presented in chapter 3.3 of this Study. The concept of the future NRCG is crosscutting in different sectors i.e. the centre is to provide support services to CG counsellors, providers of CG services and policy makers in all sectors in which CG services are provided. It is very important that all mentioned partners “feel the ownership” over NRCG and that NRCG really serves the needs of all partners, not just one or two.</p> <p>Before the beginning of the project following steps should be carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reach the agreement among CG policy makers which ministry or national institution will propose and implement the NRCG project.• Develop financial plan for the NRCG in close cooperation with the donor.• Nominate the NRCG steering board composed by representatives of all partners (with strong recommendation that <u>nominated members should be familiar with CG profession and management aspects in their own organisation</u>). <p>At the beginning of the project following activities need to be accomplished:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Selection of management and staff of the NRCG.• Confirmation of the concept (roles and activities) of the centre.

- Prepare development plan which includes development of materials, methods, services, staff training and other outputs needed to perform NRCG services and carry out the work plan.
- Prepare work plan including envisaged NRCG services which will be carried out within the duration of the project.

Policy coordination

According to the Strategy for Career Guidance and Counselling in the Republic of Serbia the policy of CG has been coordinated by MoYS throughout the implementation period of the Strategy (2010-2014). MoYS has also provided support to the Working group for the implementation of the Strategy. Coordination needs to be strengthened in future as described in paragraph 2.3.1 (Career guidance policy). We propose that future policy coordination in the field of CG is also supported by one of the future international projects which will provide resources for further professional support to policy makers and support for their participation and better integration into the EU network of policy makers (European Lifelong Policy Network – ELGPN).

Within this project the structure for permanent CG policy coordination mechanism is to will be developed and NRCG should be included in the provision of such support. The institution which will apply for policy coordination project should be the same institution which will apply for NRCG project since these topics are closely linked.

Career information system

A national system of career information will be developed on the e-platform which will be used by end users and guidance staff as a single access point to reach wide range of information on education programmes and providers, on training and retraining opportunities, on occupations and careers, vacancies, etc.

Development of e-tools for career development

E-tools for career development will play an important role in CG provision in the future and in many countries e-tools are successfully integrated into the provision of CG in primary and secondary schools. In primary and secondary schools in Serbia the benefits of e-tools seem to be still largely unexploited as described in chapters 2.3.2 and 2.3.3. Therefore we propose a project in which relevant contemporary e-tool, or e-tools if needed, will be developed.

Contemporary tools offer not just information about education and employment possibilities but also provide support to career decision making process and help the user to manage his/her career.

We propose to develop a complex e-tool through following phases:

- Analysis of the existing tools and needs of the users,
- Defining functions and concept of the new e-tools (for example self-assessment of interests, competences, values and other personal traits etc.),
- Developing the tool with all its elements (self-assessment scales, relative information, instructions, etc.) including algorithm for matching characteristics of users with the requirements of occupations.
- Programming of the tool,
- Testing the tool on the sample of users and evaluation of the testing,
- Production of final version of e-tool including manuals for counsellors,
- Staff training,
- Promotion of tool to counsellors and students.

E-tools can enrich CG provision in schools but they cannot replace counsellors and other CG activities in the school therefore within the project the procedures should be developed to integrate the new e-tool into the programme of CG in the school.

Training of guidance staff (counsellors& others)

The need for improved training for CG staff is mentioned several times in this Study (for example 2.3.1, 2.3.2,

2.3.5). Current situation is that training of career guidance staff is provided mostly on a project base (ad hoc) and is not integrated in the CG system as a regular permanent activity. Trainings are provided occasionally, training programmes are very divers and it is difficult to know what competences CG staff really has. In Serbian CG system there is a strong need to develop and deliver standardised training for career guidance staff on all levels. Many EU member states encountered similar problems in past and undertook relevant measures to overcome weaknesses of CG training.

We propose to policy makers to launch a training project with one of international donor programmes in which a common set of competences and learning outcomes will be agreed for two or three levels of career guidance staff. Such training programmes will give participants common competences, we can also say core competences, to begin to work in career guidance services regardless the sector, in education, employment etc. Within the project training programme should be defined which ones will lead to two-three nationally recognised career guidance qualifications. Within the project, CG training should be provided to substantial number of CG staff in Serbia.

It should be mentioned that proposed CG training project will not replace all future trainings in the field of career guidance. Practitioners who will accomplish before mentioned national recognised training will be competent to start the job in CG services in various sectors but should receive further training more specialised for education, employment and other sectors. Though training is clearly a crosscutting issue, it is also an issue for guidance projects in each sector (i.e. education, employment, youth). However, concrete planning of the projects should be coordinated to prevent overlap and duplication of themes in various sector projects.

Establishing a training centre for career guidance staff, as part of one of the existing training providers, is also the option which could be considered.

Quality standards

Development of specific quality assurance system for career guidance, a crosscutting theme in EU guidance policy, is also a need in Serbia. Development of quality assurance system, either through quality guidelines or quality standards) is a theme for one of the future international projects. A challenge in this project will be either to develop standards for all guidance sectors (like for example UK standard Matrix) or standards for each sector.

Our proposal regarding the project to develop quality standards for CG is as follows:

- Future quality assurance mechanism/system should be developed, like in other EU member states, within of the future international CG projects.
- Though in Serbia quality of CG provision has been partly included in other sector-based national quality standards (for example in education sector) a common national quality mechanism should be developed to overcome fragmentation of CG quality standards and to assure common framework for quality of CG services regardless the sector in these services operate. Common national quality framework should be accepted in all sectors and should serve as a base for the development of sector-based quality standards.
- Such national quality framework should be in line with the existing European Quality-Assurance Framework.
- All national stakeholders should cooperate in the development of common national quality framework

EDUCATION

Further support to career guidance in primary schools

The support to career guidance in primary school, currently provided through GIZ project, will cease in 2015. Introduction of CG in schools is a process which lasts long and needs further support which can be provided through one of future international projects. Such project could provide support such as training of teachers and other staff, development of teaching materials, job-descriptions (if not provided by NES), video-films about

occupations, capacity building for primary schools, cooperation with local network, etc. Career guidance services for students with special needs should also be developed and this may be the topic for special project.

Introduction of career guidance in secondary schools

Provision of career guidance to secondary school students is currently the biggest gap in CG system in Serbia. It should be continued with the projects similar to current GIZ project for support career guidance in primary schools.

Further development of University career centres

Concrete themes of future development projects should be considered and elaborated by university career centres themselves on the basis of the analysis of the needs of the university students. Potential themes which might be considered are design of an e-counselling tool specialised for students, further training of the counsellors, exchange programmes, etc.

YOUTH SECTOR

Strengthening the role of Local Youth Offices in Career Guidance

LYOs are currently involved, through projects, in the provision of career guidance mainly to primary and secondary school students and will be involved in IPA 2012 Grant, administered by NES, in which 10 career guidance centres are foreseen to be established within Local Self-Government units. Further development of peer youth friendly CG services within one of the future projects will help to develop capacities of LYOs for provision of effective guidance services. Capacities of LYOs to provide outreach guidance programmes could also be addressed. In addition internship and apprenticeship programmes in partnership with local stakeholders could also be developed.

EMPLOYMENT

Further support to the development of career guidance in NES

NES is currently involved in a number of projects and afore mentioned IPA 2012 Grant which is about to start in autumn 2014. Though various ideas for future guidance projects have been discussed in the past, current situation should be analysed to elaborate concrete themes for further development projects. One of the areas in which the need for support was clearly expressed is training on career guidance for NES staff (including career counsellors and employment advisers). Another is stronger role of career guidance in activation of the unemployed.

CG services for vulnerable groups

CG service which NES provides to some vulnerable groups are not specialised enough to meet the needs of those target groups and need to be improved. Services for some other target groups need to be developed. In this project cooperation with other institutions which are specialised for particular target groups is required.

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Annexes

List of conducted interviews

List of conducted interviews for the Feasibility Study for the establishment of a National Resource Centre for career guidance and counselling in the Republic of Serbia (*=Members of the Working Group for Implementation of the Strategy of Career Guidance)				
N. ind.	N. Inst.	INSTITUTION	NAME	FUNCTION
1.	1.	Ministry of Youth and Sport	Vesna Vidojević	Senior Advisor for analytics in LYO, youth organizations, employment and education
2.		Ministry of Youth and Sport	Đuro Blanuša	Advisor
3.		Ministry of Youth and Sport	Marija Petronijević	Advisor for analytics and career guidance and counselling
4.	2.	Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development	Gordana Cvetković	Head of School Administration Belgrade
5.	3.	Belgrade Open School	Vesna Đukić*	Director
6.		Belgrade Open School	Milorad Bjeletić	Executive Director
7.		Belgrade Open School	Jelena Manić	Coordinator of the Career Guidance and Counselling Centre
8.	4.	Serbian Chamber of Commerce	Mirjana Kovačević	Director of the educational development, Professional development Unit
9.		Serbian Chamber of Commerce	Mirjana Bjelobaba	Advisor for educational development, Professional development Unit
10.	5.	National Employment Service	Vesna Čekić*	Head of Vocational Guidance and Career Planning Unit
11.	6.	Euroguidance, Tempus Foundation	Marko Banković	Euroguidance coordinator
12.	7.	University Centre for Career Development and Counselling, Belgrade	Dejana Lazić	Director and coordinator of the CAREERS Project
13.		University Centre for Career Development and Counselling, Belgrade	Jelena Kurjak	Coordinator of the program of career information and co-counselling
14.	8.	Serbian association of employers	Ljiljana Pavlović	Secretary for members
15.	9.	United Branch Trade Unions <i>Independence</i>	Zlata Žec	Executive Director
16.		United Branch Trade Unions <i>Independence</i>	Maja Martinić	Advisor for education, research and cooperation with NGOs
17.	10.	Public enterprise Elektromreža Srbija	Dragoslav Perić	General Manager's Advisor for Development
18.		Public enterprise Elektromreža Srbija	Bojana Nikolić	Head of the HR development unit
19.	11.	GIZ, Professional Orientation in Serbia (BOSS)	Heinz Dieter Harbers	Project leader
20.		GIZ, Professional Orientation in Serbia (BOSS)	Marija Radovanović	Senior Project Manager

21.		GIZ, Professional Orientation in Serbia (BOSS)	Aleksandra Lakićević Dobrić	Senior Project Manager
22.	12.	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Tatjana Prijic	Head of Group for the improvement of the position of PWD
23.	13.	Institute for Quality Education and Assessment	Gordana Čaprić	Deputy director
24.		Institute for Quality Education and Assessment	Jelena Najdanović Tomić	Head of Centre for Standards
25.	**	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Ljiljana Džuver	Assistant Minister for Employment
26.	14.	Ministry of Economy	Aleksandra Vučetić	Advisor
27.	**	National Employment Service	Nevena Letić	Director of Employment Mediation and Career Planning Department
28.	15.	Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling for young talents	Milica Škiljević	Project Coordinator
29.	16.	Centre Inventiva (GIZ BOSS project)	Marija Srečković	Deputy Director
30.	17.	Tio team Niš/Prokuplje	Maja Svetozarević	Tipo manager
31.	18.	Tipo team Pozarevac	Tanja Rajić	Tipo manager
32.	19.	Tipo team Kruševac	Danijela Sekulić	Tipo manager
33.	20.	Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities	Slađana Grujić	Secretary of the Committee for Local Economic Development
34.		Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities	Maja Knežević	Secretary of the Committee for Culture
35.	21.	Elementary School, Radojka Dakic, Belgrade	Vesna Vučićević	Director
36.	22.	Local Youth Office Belgrade	Kristina Lukić	Coordinator of Local Youth Office
37.	23.	National Employment Service, CIPCNiš	Dušica Dikić	Head of CIPC
38.	24.	University Centre for Career Development and Counselling, Niš	Milena Prvulović	Associate
39.	25.	University Centre for Career Development and Counselling, Niš	Miodrag Lazić	Director
40.	26.	Local Youth Office Nis	Ana Nikolić	Coordinator of Local Youth Office
41.	27.	National Employment Service, CIPC Novi Sad	Smiljana Radovanović	Head of CIPC
42.	28.	University Centre for Career Development and Counselling, Novi Sad	Sonja Šovljanski	Associate for counseling and career development of students
43.	29.	Local Youth Office Temerin	Nemanja Obradović	Coordinator of Local Youth Office
44.	30.	Local Youth Office Novi Sad	Slavica Ranisavljević	Activist of Local Youth Office
45.	31.	Elementary School, Sonja Marinkovic, Novi Sad	Tanja Surdučki	Professional Orientation Coordinator
46.		Elementary School, Sonja Marinkovic, Novi Sad	Dragica Miražić Nemet	Member of Professional Orientation Team
47.	32.	National Employment Service, CIPC	Ivana Bozović	Head of CIPC

		Beograd		
48.	33.	Ministry of Finance	Ljubiša Milosavljević*	State Secretary
49.		Ministry of Finance	Miroslav Bunčić	Advisor
50.	**	Ministry of Youth and Sport	Snežana Klašnja*	Assistant Minister for Youth
51.	**	National Employment Service	Dragan Djukić	Adviser to General Director

Legal and Policy Framework of career guidance system in Serbia

1. LAWS

Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance (RS Official Gazette No 36/2009 and 88/2010)

Vocational guidance and career planning counselling is considered as an active employment measure (Part 4, Article 43, para. 2):

4.2. Vocational guidance and career counselling

Article 49

For the purposes of this Law, vocational guidance and career counselling are activities that aim to provide individual and group assistance to job seekers and other people who need to plan their career in selecting or changing their occupation and in making decisions related to their professional development.

Activities referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article also include:

1. delivering information on the labour market and job development;
2. vocational guidance to jobseekers and other persons in planning career development;
3. developing the jobseekers' ability to make career-related decision;
4. developing active job search skills;
5. selection of candidates according to the job requirements and the persons' psychological and physical abilities;
6. other counselling activities aimed at increasing a jobseeker's employability.

Law on the Foundations of the Education System (RS Official Gazette No 72/2009, 52/2011 and 55/2013)

Article 3, which defines the general principles of the education system, sets forth that:

In applying the principles, special attention will be devoted to:

- 4 b) providing career guidance and counselling to the employed, students and adults focusing on an individual's personal growth, educational and professional development;

The responsibility of the Council for Vocational Training and Education of Adults is to:

- 7) Review and propose, within the scope of its competence, career development and guidance models; (Article 16)

Law on Primary School and Education (RS Official Gazette No 55/2013)

Article 21, item 8) sets forth that the objective of primary education is, among other, to enable pupils to make the right decisions with regard to the choice of their further education and occupation, their personal development and future life.

Article 27 sets forth that school curricula shall enable the orientation of pupils and parents/guardians with regard to the choice of school, the monitoring of the quality of the educational process and its results, as well as the assessment of the individual work and progress of each pupil; and that a school curriculum shall also incorporate a vocational orientation programme.

Article 43 focuses on vocational orientation in primary schools and sets forth that the school, in cooperation with vocational orientation institutions shall assist parents/guardians and pupils with the choice of a secondary school and profession, according to the pupils' aptitudes and abilities, and to this end, the school shall monitor their progress and provide them with information on the nature and working conditions of the individual professions.

To monitor the individual aptitudes of the pupils and provide assistance to the pupils and their parents/guardians in making choices related to secondary education and future career paths, the school shall set up a vocational orientation team, composed by teaching staff and assistants. The vocational orientation team shall implement the vocational orientation programme designed for seventh and eighth grade pupils.

Article 53 envisages that a pupils' cooperative may be established in the school to foster positive attitudes of pupils to work, professional orientation, linking learning to the working environment, as well as a positive attitude towards teamwork.

Law on Secondary Education (RS Official Gazette No 55/2013)

As part of the content of a school curriculum, Article 11 lists:

11) the career guidance and counselling programme;

The career guidance and counselling programme for pupils referred to in Article 15 envisages that:

The school shall aim to enable the development of mature and responsible individuals, capable of making well-informed and responsible decisions with regard to their future profession and to carry these decisions into effect.

The school shall form a team of career guidance and counselling experts composed by the school's educational support staff and teaching staff. The team, in cooperation with the teachers, shall monitor the individual aptitudes of the pupils. The counselling work takes place in the course of the education and, when needed, the school cooperates with competent career guidance and counselling institutions.

The school helps students and their parents explore future education and employment opportunities; identify, select and use extensive information on professions, careers, further education and training; make impartial distinctions and form their personal opinion about it. To this end, the school monitors the students' progress and informs them about occupations, educational profiles, academic conditions and labour market needs.

Law on Adult Education (RS Official Gazette No 55/2013)

Among the adult education activities listed in Article 7 is:

5) career guidance and counselling by providing specialized support to adults for their personal and professional development and employment.

Among the organizers of adult education activities career listed in Article 16 are also career guidance and counselling centres:

2) other institution, public agency, public enterprise, organization competent for employment affairs, employment agency, company, vocational rehabilitation establishment, entrepreneur, trade union, association, professional body, adult education organizations, (people's, workers', open universities, third age universities and other), centres and organizations for vocational training, foreign languages, information and communication technologies, human resources training and development, driver training, chamber of commerce, career guidance and counselling centre, employer association, cultural-educational centre, cultural institution, as well as other registered providers of education and training pursuant to the regulations governing the classification of activities, (hereinafter: "other organization").

Law on Youth (RS Official Gazette No 50/2011)

Article 20 sets forth that the budget of the Republic of Serbia will provide funding for programmes and projects of public interest in the youth sector to:

4) encourage youth career guidance and counselling and organize trainings, seminars and events that are relevant for youth employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship.

2. RULES AND STANDARDS

Rules on general standards of achievement for completing general secondary education and vocational secondary education in general education courses (RS Official Gazette No 117/2013)

The standards for general cross-curricular competencies for completing secondary education include, among other, competencies related to career guidance and counselling in the context of initiative and entrepreneurship development. It is stated therein that students should “know how to acquaint themselves with the characteristics of specific tasks and jobs”, and “be ready to do volunteer work and use various opportunities for acquiring work experience”. These competencies are specifically listed, among others:

- students understand the importance of personal activation and shows initiative to learn about labour market features (requirements of specific jobs, the way institutions function, positioning in the world of business).
- comprehend the principles of labour market mechanisms and understand the need for permanent development, in line with market developments and employer demands.
- are capable of identifying and adequately presenting their abilities and skills (“strong sides”); are able to write a CV and motivation letter.
- know how to communicate with employers; able to negotiate; willing to do an internship and volunteering work whilst respecting agreements.

Rules on detailed eligibility requirements related to programmes, personnel, facilities, equipment and teaching aids for acquiring the status of a publicly accredited adult education provider (these are proposed Rules that have not been adopted yet)

Article 2 sets forth that an organization may acquire the status of an accredited education provider (AEP) that:

3) provides career guidance and counselling;

And this also applies to primary and secondary schools.

AEP career guidance and counselling activities are implemented by primary or secondary schools through career guidance and counselling programmes, in line with the standards for career guiding and counselling services (Article 3).

The personnel tasked with the implementation of career guidance and counselling programmes is selected in accordance with the standards for career guidance and counselling services (Article 7).

Quality standards for educational institutions, 2010

The quality standards for educational institutions, listed under Section 4 - Student Support Services, item 4.2, among other, determine that the school shall aim to encourage the personal, professional and social development of its students, and one of the indicators of achievement is the encouragement of the students’ professional development throughout the teaching process.

3. STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS

National Employment Strategy 2011-2020

2.2. Enhance the quality of human capital (p. 34)

Investment in the quality of human capital and the education system is the foundation of economic growth, and of an innovative and competitive economy with more and better jobs. Suitable knowledge and its application are recognized as a key factor of development that Serbia must use to its full potential, considering all other available

factors and resources. The development of the economy and society is inconceivable without adequate human resources, hence, human resources development and management entails all processes and activities that aim to increase employment and labour productivity, develop and train personnel, by increasing labour market skills and competencies and developing legislation in the area of education and employment.

Measures and activities should focus on encouraging the professional development of workers, by developing a system of career guidance and counselling, and by reducing the labour supply and demand gap, in other words the gap between the world of work and education. The education and learning processes should be driven by learning outcomes, i.e. the applicability of the acquired competencies, and by increased competitiveness on the labour market.

The ministries responsible for education and employment will cooperate to analyse and design education policies aligned to labour market needs, with a focus on improving quality, especially for short-term training and practical training. The latter should be harmonized with the formal education system, because practical knowledge and skills play an important role in employment and labour market integration. In doing so, special emphasis should be placed on implementing short-term training programmes for the hard-to-employ and most vulnerable groups, with a view to increasing their qualifications and competitiveness on the labour market

2.2.1. Career guidance and counselling development

The national career guidance and counselling strategy, along with the action plan for its implementation, which should result in the establishment of a career guidance and counselling system, is a policy document that should contribute to accelerate reforms in the field of education and employment.

Systematic organization in the area of career guidance and counselling should improve the labour market outlook in Serbia, and as an important segment of social development, it should enable the personal development of every individual, so that they are able to make their own decisions with regard to education, employment, work as well as career planning and management. This should help and enable the unemployed to clarify their immediate objectives in terms of employment, job search and employment retention, and also their readiness to undertake training and acquire additional knowledge and skills and increase their competencies, thereby significantly improving their competitiveness, labour market mobility, and consequently employment.

The implementation of the National Career Guidance and Counselling Programme will involve the participation of different age groups and categories, such as children, students, youth and adults. This will contribute to the achievement of objectives primarily related to the promotion and development of lifelong learning, the development of a labour market system by reducing the gap between supply and demand and improving the quality of the workforce, its competitiveness and mobility, as well as social equality and inclusion of youth and adults. The role and cooperation of the line ministries for education, employment and youth, the NES, the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, the Employers' Union, educational institutions and employers is extremely important for the introduction of the career guidance and counselling system, and the implementation of the aforesaid activities.

In the forthcoming years, activities must be intensified to develop existing and open new Information and Career Counselling Centres for all NES clients, to establish mobile centres for rural areas, to develop skills of the staff of the centres, to define and implement measures for activities targeting the involvement of the unemployed in further education and training aimed at their employment, as well as the intensive and continued promotion of career guidance and counselling, thereby contributing to a better developed career guidance and counselling system especially in the field of employment.

National Employment Action Plan 2014

III ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF LABOR FORCE AND INVESTING IN HUMAN CAPITAL			
Measure/activity	Outcome / Expected results	Implementing agencies	Source of finance
3.1. Promotion and further development of career guidance and counselling services	Active participation in the implementation of the Career Guidance and Counselling Strategy and protocols on cooperation signed for the implementation of specific activities. New career guidance and counselling centres opened in elementary, secondary and high-educational institutions. Job orientation fairs organized. Career guidance and counselling sites updated and promoted. Media campaign to promote career guidance and counselling organized. Information material on career guidance and counselling prepared and distributed.	MYS MESTD MLESP NES Universities and other career centres Associations	Budget of the Republic of Serbia
3.2. Further development of Information and Career Counselling Centres (ICCCs)	New ICCCs established in NES and in local government units. Cooperation established between the ICCCs and information desks at youth offices, in terms of exchange of information relevant for career development.	MLESP NES Local self-government units MYS Youth offices Technical assistance project	Budget of the Republic of Serbia Budget of local self-government units IPA 2012

Strategy for the Development of Education in Serbia by 2020

Defining the quality of the school as an institution, on page 64 it is stated:

(4) The career guidance and counselling programme for students aged 15 to 18 includes information, counselling, guidance and taking decisions with regard to the choice of their future profession. The aim of the programme is to help youths understand and interpret information about the working environment and future careers, to enable them to clarify any doubts they might have with regard to any profession or job, to teach them how to recognize their abilities and define their views on the proposed or desired choice. The basic standards for career guidance and counselling of talented or gifted young people from vulnerable social groups should also acknowledge the specificities that apply to these groups. The career guidance and counselling standards for students include personal development; exploration of learning and employment opportunities; identification, selection and use of extensive information on professions, careers, further training and education, and the formation of a personal opinion with regard; personal career planning and management (Career Guidance and Counselling Strategy in the Republic of Serbia). As regards the development of entrepreneurship at general and art secondary education (GASE) students, that is not intended to prepare students for a certain profession but rather to help them learn about their own qualities and aptitudes, and acquaint themselves with the nature of the working environment.

The required reforms in the GASE are listed on p. 66 as follows:

Career guidance should be developed in primary schools, not only to help pupils, but also to improve pupil identification and channel them towards into their future academic education. The final primary school exams and entry exams in the GASE have to be harmonized; learning about the working environment.

A measure designed to reduce the early drop-out rate in the secondary education system (SES), listed on p. 81, envisages the need to implement:

3) training in student career guidance for teachers and education support staff in all secondary vocational schools;

One of the elements in the vocational studies development strategy is the creation of a modern system of post-secondary vocational education, which also entails Information, Counselling and Career Guidance for Students (p. 140).

On p. 155 a vision is elaborated for the development of adult education that also includes a:

Career Guidance and Counselling System

The career guidance and counselling system shall be developed and fully applied to provide advisory services to assist adults improve their employability and increase their social engagement, as well as to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies for making the right decisions in all spheres of the adult life and work.

Same as on p. 158.

Adult Career Guidance and Counselling

A career guidance and counselling system has been developed to some extent, since a Career Guidance and Counselling Strategy was adopted in the Republic of Serbia in 2010 (RS Official Gazette No 16/10), along with an Action Plan for its implementation. The further development of existing and the establishment of new Information and Career Counselling Centres is envisaged for all NES clients, for the purpose of a better coverage of the unemployed and clients belonging to vulnerable target groups. Since 2005, the NES has been organizing active job search workshops, job clubs, trainings for hard-to-employ individuals, for the long-term unemployed, returnees to the labour market and redundant workers. The clients are mostly unemployed adults or individuals who are looking for a job change. In the last decade, career development and counselling centres have been established for students of two-year post-schools. These centres primarily aim to provide services to students and do not target the broader adult population.

In the strategy for the achievement of the vision, on page 165, under the heading “Adult Career Guidance and Counselling”, it is stated as follows:

In line with the concept of lifelong learning, with a view to enhancing the development of the adults’ skills and expertise that match labour market demand, and their adequate social participation, we must further develop and enhance the adult career guidance and counselling system in education and employment. The process of guiding and counselling adults helps individuals properly consider opportunities and take the right decision about ways of acquiring the knowledge, skills and competencies that will enable their individual and professional development. The system is particularly important for socially marginalized individuals who are disadvantaged because of their age, sex, class, ethnic origin, religious affiliation, employment status and illiteracy.

Actions:

- 1) providing information and assistance in understanding and interpreting information, in identifying aspirations, opportunities and needs in making career choices;
- 2) guidance and counselling on how to acquire the required skills for making important decisions concerning professional development;
- 3) collecting information about the satisfaction of clients and social partners, primarily employers.

Measures:

- 1) there is a need to establish adult career guidance and counselling centres in formal and non-formal educational facilities and institutions;
- 2) adult education and employment counselling;
- 3) creating an integrated database on adults who are interested in further professional training (retraining and up-skilling);

Indicators:

- 1) number of career guidance and counselling centres;
- 2) number of clients using the services of the centres;
- 3) seminars, trainings, workshops and other forms of education organized for adults, according to their needs.

The required reforms in the institutional environment are discussed on p. 166, where it is stated that:

To match the labour market supply and demand, a partnership must be forged on local level between the prospective students and educational institutions, NES branch offices, adult career guidance and counselling centres, research centres, companies, local governments and NGOs.

Vocational Education Development Strategy

The topic of Career Guidance and Counselling topic is elaborated on p. 21.

Labour market shifts and the changing demand for skills present new challenges for prospective graduate students looking for work. These are challenges that impose a different role and tasks on vocational schools and employment services in relation to students and attendees.

The career guidance and counselling system in vocational education in Serbia will be developed gradually, and its main task will be to help students and attendees find work and/or continue with further education. The counselling system should provide orientation for students and attendees on economic development and labour market needs; demographic changes in the structure of the population and their impact on needs; the implementation of the concept of lifelong learning, which is geared towards a permanent development of human resources and the monitoring of economic development needs.

Career guidance and counselling is an ongoing activity throughout the entire period of vocational education and training which should provide:

1. In-depth information about:

- opportunities for the application of the knowledge, skills and capabilities acquired within an educational profile in a working environment;

- labour market trends and employment outlooks;
- opportunities and conditions for further education and development;

2. Skills:

- personal presentation skills and application techniques;
- learning techniques;
- job search techniques.

3. Individual work with students and adults includes:

- expert assistance in developing a realistic perception of oneself - of one's personal characteristics, as well as educational and professional aspirations;
- identification of the activities where one can achieve the highest level of personal success, in line with job requirements;
- developing an individually attainable career plan based on one's personal predispositions;
- nurturing positive and flexible attitudes to possible changes of the career plan and the acceptance of risks and challenges;
- learning about the process and contents required for making career and education related decisions;
- developing communication skills;
- developing problem identification and solving skills;
- developing a positive attitude to lifelong learning;
- developing awareness of the importance of work for personal and social self-actualization.

With a view to the role and function of career guidance and counselling, the two line ministries (Ministry of Education and Sport and Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy) must agree and specify the procedure for joint action in this field, and define the key principles for the development of career guidance and counselling in a separate policy document. This document should define the involvement of social partners, professional associations, associations of students and their parents, associations of students and former school pupils, local governments and other relevant stakeholders.

The implementation of the proposed strategy would involve a broad network of agencies, institutions, associations, faculties, adult educational facilities and others.

National Youth Strategy

On page 27, it is stated that youth career guidance and counselling entails the delivery of services to young schools and colleges students designed to help them choose their educational profile and vocation, further education, employment and to channel them into training and further education programmes.

The goal is defined on page 44:

4.3. Build a youth information system at all levels and in all fields with the following specific objective (p.45):

4.3.5. Increase the level of awareness of youth about career choices, employment opportunities and labour market outlooks.

Measures

4.3.5.1. Develop career guidance and counselling practices at all levels of education with the support of expert teams;

4.3.5.2. Develop and affirm a youth career guidance and counselling system at all levels of education with the support of expert teams, and in particular through the youth offices' activity;

4.3.5.3. Make the Information and Career Counselling Centres within the National Employment Service accessible to youth in all regions;

4.3.5.4. Inform young people about the situation and perspectives on the national and local labour markets;

4.3.5.5. Increase the efficiency of counselling services working with youth.

As well as to 4.4. Guarantee equal opportunities to all young people in the society, in particular disadvantaged youths (p. 46):

Specific objective

4.4.9. Increase employment of young members of vulnerable groups

Measures

4.4.9.1. Develop a career guidance and counselling system for youths belonging to vulnerable groups in all regions;

4.4.9.2. Stimulate employment of youths belonging to vulnerable groups.

Goal4.7.is: Develop an open, effective, efficient and equitable formal and non-formal education system accessible to all youths and in line with global educational trends and the educational context in Serbia.

(p. 54)

Specific objective

4.7.7 Empower youths to manage their career actively, responsibly and efficiently

Measures

4.7.7.1. Establish a career guidance and counselling centre within educational and other institutions;

4.7.7.2. Support the development of career guidance and counselling professionals;

4.7.7.3. Support activities aimed at promoting career guidance and counselling practices;

4.7.7.4. Curricular and extracurricular activities should include activities, information and courses on career guidance and counselling, on the labour market situation and outlooks, entrepreneurship, work ethics, volunteering, work experience and internship programmes, on the lifelong learning concept, etc. (p. 57)

Specific objective

4.8.1. Improve the prospects of young people on the labour market and create the conditions for more frequent and better quality employment of youth

Measures

4.8.1.1. Ensure youth access to career guidance and counselling in all regions;

p. 58

Specific objective

4.8.3. Stimulate the creation of new jobs; develop self-employment and entrepreneurship among youth in all regions

Measures

4.8.3.1. Encourage delivery of information, career guidance and counselling services to youths concerning self-employment opportunities and entrepreneurship development.

The following definitions are provided in the glossary:

Career guidance and counselling– an organized system of social and professional activity designed to continuously deliver support to individuals throughout their entire career development, in their free choice of educational and professional paths and orientation, with the aim of attaining professional quality standards, in accordance with their personal characteristics and labour market demand for certain professions. (p. 70)

Information and Career Counselling Centre – service assisting the unemployed, the employed seeking a job change, pupils and students with career planning, by providing information on occupations, employment and further education and training opportunities, as well as advice on career choices and changes. Employers are also given the opportunity to acquire information on recruitment of excellent interns or employees, and advice on selecting personnel. (p. 72)