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CROSS BORDER SEMINAR

Guidance in a Digital World

9-10 June 2026, Budapest, Hungary



COMPENDIUM

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The compendium gathers articles of Euroguidance Cross Border Seminar experts from Croatia, Czechia, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Serbia and Slovenia.

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The background of the page is a complex network diagram. It consists of numerous circular nodes of varying sizes, colored in different shades of green (dark green, medium green, and light green). These nodes are interconnected by a web of thin, light green lines, creating a dense, interconnected pattern that resembles a molecular structure or a data network. The nodes are distributed across the entire page, with some appearing more prominent than others.

Foreword



The Euroguidance Network is a network of national resource and information centres dedicated to enhancing career guidance systems across Europe. Operating in EU and EEA member states, as well as candidate countries, Euroguidance serves guidance practitioners and policy makers in the education and employment sectors.

All Euroguidance centres share a common objective: developing the competence of the guidance community on the European dimension of lifelong guidance. This includes the following activity areas: Strategic cooperation and knowledge sharing within lifelong guidance in Europe; Support for developing the competence of the European guidance community; Contribution to and implementation of European instruments and policies.

The emphasis of the activity and the concrete tasks of the Euroguidance centres vary in different countries.

Common activities are:

- **Promoting the European dimension in the field of guidance:** Euroguidance supports the national and international networking of guidance practitioners by organising seminars, training, 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 other European stakeholders to strengthen the role of guidance in education and training.
- **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 states and candidate countries; European initiatives and programmes within the fields of education, training, and



mobility; project results, innovative working methods, and good practice in the field of lifelong guidance.

The Euroguidance Cross Border Seminar is one of the international professional development initiatives of the Euroguidance Network. Launched in 2005, the seminar today serves as a platform for exchanging knowledge, experiences and innovative practices in career guidance and counselling. Originally initiated by Euroguidance Centres from Austria, Czechia and Slovakia, the seminar now includes participation from 11 European countries (Austria, Croatia, Czechia, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia), and this year the initiative was organised by all participating countries. The countries are represented by national delegations of practitioners, experts and policy makers.

The Euroguidance Cross Border Seminar 2026 'Guidance in a Digital World' was organised

in Budapest, Hungary, from June 9–10, 2026, where international experts, counsellors, and policymakers discussed digital tools, innovative methods, and the impact of technology on career counselling.

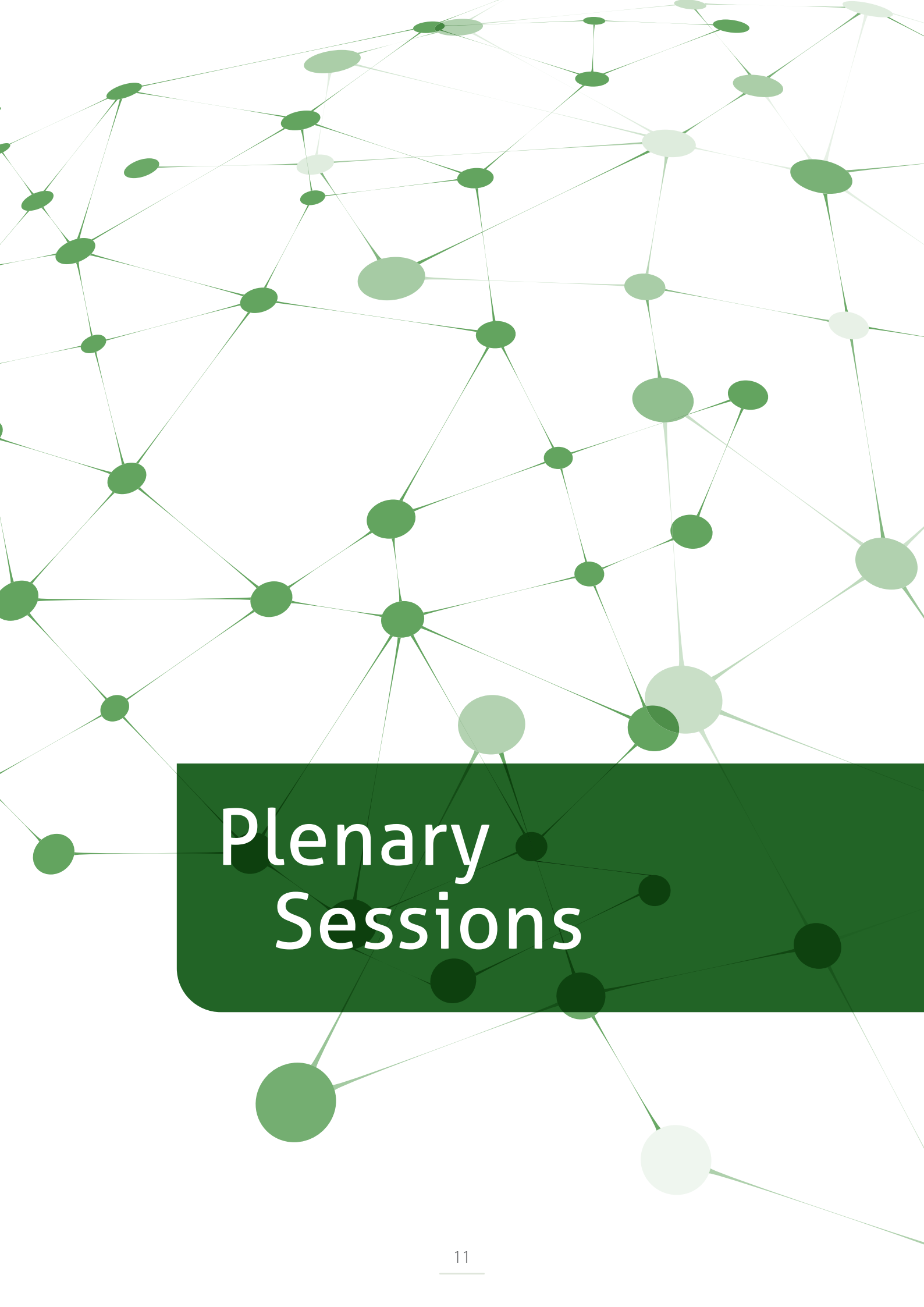
In today's rapidly evolving job market, career guidance has entered a new era shaped by digital transformation. Traditional guidance and counselling methods are being redefined as technology opens fresh opportunities for students, professionals and institutions worldwide. The rise of automation, artificial intelligence and online platforms has changed the way people explore and pursue careers.

Guidance is no longer limited to face-to-face sessions and digital services and tools (e.g. virtual mentorship, AI-powered assessments, global networking platforms, etc.) now play a central role. Recognizing the importance of this topic, during this 2-day event career guidance professionals, researchers and policy makers



joined their forces and explored the opportunities which guidance tools and services bring to practitioners and their clients. Furthermore, potential risks and concerns, as well as recommendations for the meaningful use of digital CGC tools and services were discussed.

This compendium includes short articles from plenary sessions and the seminar workshops. It offers useful highlights for participants, and anyone else interested in the topic. For more information and presentations of the seminar, please visit: <https://cbs2026.ampeu.hr/>



Plenary Sessions

Mediatization of Career Counselling

Prof. Dr. Dennis Mocigemba - HdBA - University of Applied Labour Studies (Mannheim, Germany), Professor for Career Counselling

At the Euroguidance Cross Border Seminar, Prof. Dr. Dennis Mocigemba delivered a keynote on how “deep mediatization” reshapes the culture, logic, and professional identities in career counselling. Rather than viewing counsellors as passive observers of digital transformation, he emphasized their active agency in co-creatively taming, re-purposing, and adopting diverse counselling media ensembles.

Following the presentation, participants engaged in an experiential sociodrama to make these invisible digital dynamics tangible. In breakout groups, they first explored the “Core of Career Counselling,” physically representing its fundamental elements through collaborative scul-

tures. Key components such as “Trust,” “Giving Why,” and “Human Connection” were vividly staged. Around this “Holy Core,” a sociodrama evolved where counsellors connected with clients while various counselling media flooded the scene. In the end, participants derived recommendations for the mediatization of career counselling from this experience, noting: “As counsellors, we are also responsible for creating silence and slowness in this mediatized and accelerated world.” “As counsellors, we have to tinker with technology more.” “As counsellors, we may reject some tools; not every tool works for everybody.” “The effect of media and tools for counselling lies not in the tool itself, but in the way we use it.”



Retrospective: The Mediatization of Career Counselling

At the recent Euroguidance Cross Border Seminar, Prof. Dr. Dennis Mocigemba from the University of Applied Labor Studies in Mannheim, Germany, delivered a profound keynote address followed by an immersive sociodrama on the “Mediatization of Career Counselling”.

This comprehensive session explored how the integration of communication technologies poses unique challenges that fundamentally reshape the culture, logic, and relational dynamics of the career counselling profession.

The following retrospective provides an in-depth look at the theoretical frameworks presented and the experiential learning that took place.



Understanding Deep Mediatization

Dennis began his keynote by inviting practitioners to reflect on their relationship with digital tools. He established that the megatrend of digitalization is actively flooding all social domains with various communication media. However, he emphasized that integrating communication media into career counselling is actually not a new phenomenon; physical files, flyers, books, paper-based assessments, flipcharts, telephone and other analogue or electronic media have long been part of the professional routine. What defines the current era is the shift toward “Deep Mediatization”.

Drawing on contemporary media theory, the keynote outlined five distinct characteristics of today’s deeply mediatized landscape. First is *Differentiation*: the landscape is not converging into a single hybrid medium, but rather branching out, resulting in a specific app or device for almost every conceivable need. Second is *Con-*

nectivity, characterized by a “media manifold” where professionals must navigate complex media ensembles and repertoires rather than isolated tools. Third is *Omnipresence*, as digital media deeply permeate all spheres of life, geographic regions, and social domains. Fourth is the *Pace of Innovation*; media is now experienced as a continuous process, perpetually in a “beta” state, rendering digital products fluid and in constant flux. Finally, *Datafication* means that increasingly more objects in our environments are software-based, constantly leaving digital traces.

Faced with these realities, Dennis argued that counsellors must cultivate an attitude of humbleness. They must shift their focus from individual tools to broader media ensembles, accept that remaining completely “low-tech” is no longer a viable expectation, and embrace the continuous “tinkering” with media as an inherent part of their professional identity.

Reclaiming Agency in a Digital World

A central thesis of the presentation was that career counsellors are not mere passive passengers in this technological transformation; rather, they possess significant agency. The keynote highlighted four research perspectives to illustrate this active role:

1. **Diffusion Research:** Emphasizes that counsellors actively make choices to adopt or reject specific media. Deep mediatization is fundamentally a social process rather than a strictly technological one.
2. **User Innovation Research:** Shows that users frequently re-invent and re-purpose media, often leading to surprising and disruptive changes in practice.
3. **Media Usage Research:** Frames deep mediatization as a co-creative process between clients and counsellors, where media is individually appropriated to fit specific relational contexts.
4. **Media Domestication Research:** Suggests that counsellors must actively “tame” and domesticate media, grounding these digital tools within the analog realities of physical time and space.

Ultimately, the call to action was to focus not on the technology itself, but on the human practice that technology is meant to enhance, prompting a vital question: What is the “Holy Core of Career Counselling” in a deeply mediatized world?



Making the Invisible Tangible

To transition from theoretical understanding to experiential learning, participants were invited to clear the room and engage in a structured sociodrama. This method was designed to make the often-invisible dynamics of digital transformation tangible, relational, and open for discussion.

The sociodrama commenced with a warm-up, where participants walked around the room, greeting one another first using body language then their native tongues. They then mapped themselves geographically and scaled their experience based on the number of Euroguidance seminars they had attended and their years of

experience in career counselling. Following the warm-up, the group embarked on a 25-minute exploration of the “Core of Career Counselling”. Divided into eight breakout groups, participants were tasked with identifying the absolute essence of their profession and representing it physically through collaborative human sculptures. This physicalization of abstract concepts yielded profound results. Groups vividly staged elements that they deemed untouchable by technology, identifying “Trust,” “Giving Why,” “Human Connection” among others as the foundational pillars of their work.

Staging the Mediatized Encounter

Once the core elements were established, sociodrama transitioned into simulating the mediatization of the profession. The physical space was carefully arranged: eight delegates representing the “Holy Core of Career Counselling” were positioned in the center of the room. Around them, chairs were placed for counsellors, who were subsequently joined by clients, initiating the counselling encounter.

As these counsellor-client interactions unfolded, the environment was intentionally disrupted. More participants entered the stage as auxiliaries representing counselling media which tried to join and saturate the conversations. These human representations of technology flooded the scene, physically interrupting, altering, enhancing and mediatizing the space between counsellors, clients, and the “Holy Core.” Dennis, as the director of the play, periodically zoomed in, asking participants to verbally express what they were experiencing, thinking and feeling in the moment, capturing the real-time friction, overwhelm, or facilitation brought about by the introduction of media.



Reflection and Recommendations for the Future

The session concluded with a structured reflection period. Participants returned to their initial breakout groups to unpack their experiences and distill personal learnings from the roles they inhabited. Before leaving for the coffee break, they officially stepped out of their dramatic roles to share their insights with the wider plenary.

From this profound, embodied experience, the participants derived various crucial recommendations and insights regarding the mediatization of their profession: They recognized the need for boundaries, stating, “As counsellors, we are also responsible for creating silence and slowness in this mediatized and accelerated world.” They embraced the necessity of experimentation, concluding, “As counsellors, we have

to tinker with technology more.” They asserted their professional autonomy: “As counsellors, we may reject some tools; not every tool works for everybody.” Also, they affirmed the primacy of human intention over technological capability, claiming that “The effect of media and tools for counselling lies not in the tool itself, but in the way we use it.”

Through this innovative combination of academic keynote and experiential sociodrama, the seminar successfully illuminated the complex, co-creative reality of modern career counselling, equipping practitioners with both the theoretical framework and the embodied awareness needed to navigate the digital future.



About the Expert

Prof. Dr. Dennis Mocigemba is Professor of Counselling Sciences with a focus on Professional and Digital Counselling at the University of Applied Labour Studies (HdBA), Mannheim, where he has taught and researched since 2018.

Trained in Social and Media Sciences at Humboldt University and Technical University of Berlin, he earned his Dr. phil. in 2004 for his dissertation on the "History of Ideas on Computer Use." He worked as a postdoctoral researcher at Jacobs University Bremen until 2007 in the field of environmental and sustainability communication, specializing in digital and social media.

From 2008 to 2017, he worked at the University of Freiburg, where he initially led the development of the Freiburg's Online Self-Assessments and later the Central Student Advisory Service. In 2018, he worked as a consultant for higher education at the University of Marburg. As a systemic consultant and coach (ISB-W) and psychodramatist (DFP), he regularly supports individuals, groups, teams and organizations in change processes.



Human-Centred Guidance in an AI-Driven Labour Market: New Roles, New Responsibilities¹

Dr. Tibor Bors Borbély-Pecze - ELTE, Hungarian Pedagogical Society

*"It was Like Being a God"² /
„The gods were pushing me.”*

(Fritz Wendel's first flight of the Messerschmitt Me 262 V1 prototype on April 18, 1941)

Keywords: *human-AI interfaces, LMIS, sense making*

Artificial intelligence (AI) plays a critical role in enhancing the way Europeans learn, work, and make decisions regarding their life courses. At the same time, AI influences the dynamic nature of the information bases through which Europeans make career decisions.

For instance, as labour market intelligence systems (LMIS) develop alongside AI, they are transforming into dynamic infrastructures for labour market information. Thus, these dynamic infrastructures contain statistical and 'non-statistical' information on the labour market from different sources, including employer data, online job vacancies, national skills classifications, and administrative data. These dynamic systems far exceed simply providing aggregate information on the European labour market. Rather, these dynamic infrastructures enable the harmonization of labour market data, as well as improved accuracy and continuous monitoring of fluctuations in the labour market.

Real-time labour market information is dramatically changing the face of career guidance worldwide. With evolving labour market information systems (LMIS), which are becoming increasingly dynamic and up-to-date, practitioners now have unprecedented access to up-to-the-minute labour market knowledge, trends, and estimates on occupations, hiring, and industry shifts, to name just a few areas. This benefits guidance practice because, unlike traditional uses of labour market information that are static or dependent on previous trends, practitioners can now assist clients to better understand what is currently being experienced in the labour market and, indeed, use this information to assist clients in making contemporary and timely decisions about their lives. Real-time labour market information also allows practitioners and guidance professionals a better chance to identify immediate trends, new possibilities, and labour market shifts, including new green jobs, declining industries, and shifting demand for new digital skill sets.

Nevertheless, the value of real-time LMI is heavily reliant on the practitioner's capability to contextualize dynamic data, question the interpretation of automated systems, and integrate the information into a wider contextualized story of career development. Indeed, when combined with collaborative contributions to stakeholder

¹ This text was co-written by MS Copilot AI.

² <https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/article/the-me-262-and-the-beginning-of-the-jet-fighter-age/>

input, quality data standards, and user-friendly interpretive software, the value of real-time LMIS enhances the advice process to learners, job seekers, and workers seeking to navigate dynamic and increasingly fluid career/labour market environments.

But that's where the career counsellor/advisor's problem begins. Until now, we have been accustomed to modern states guaranteeing the reliability of LMI, not global algorithms. *If we don't know what's going on inside the machine, can we trust it?* We return to the fears of the second industrial revolution, the Luddite movement. Machines are taking our jobs, and we cannot even trust them.

As these systems gather breadth and depth, the role of guidance professionals becomes increasingly cantered on **sense-making**: *helping clients navigate complex datasets, questioning algorithmic assumptions, and connecting labour market intelligence with personal aspirations and contextual realities*. Practitioners must critically assess data provenance, identify potential biases

or gaps, and ensure that clients understand both the insights and the limitations of LMIS outputs. In this evolving digital environment, AI serves not as a replacement for human judgment but as a catalyst for enhancing the interpretive, ethical, and relational dimensions of career guidance practice. The core contribution of Engström et al. (2024) is that people's early *sensemaking* of AI in their work environment fundamentally shapes how they learn, adapt, and respond to technological change. Based this career counselling is that practitioners must support clients' sensemaking of AI, because this early interpretation determines whether they resist change or embrace adaptive, exploratory career development pathways.

At the same time, Europe's skills and guidance ecosystem is investing in AI-augmented skills intelligence, notably via CEDEFOP's "AI futures of work" and the 2024 AI Skills Survey, which reports (CEDEFOP, 2025) heterogeneous adoption across sectors and countries, significant upskilling needs, and a central role for AI literacy and worker empowerment in ensuring just transitions.



These findings reinforce a shift from solely technical skilling to socio-technical competence: critical judgment, collaborative problem solving, and inclusive design. For guidance systems, the implication is clear: AI should enhance practitioners' sense-making with clients, not replace it.

The example of LMIS and ESCO shows us the various ways human AI interfaces are changing information infrastructures. The European Commission uses data science and AI to augment and modify ESCO's multilingual taxonomy, machine mining national classifiers, and online vacancies to highlight new and emerging occupations/skills and improve cross-occupational links. Of course, this facilitates faster updates and broader reach, but it also places greater emphasis on interpretation in context, validation, and translation, and on acting as a mediator between probabilistic outcomes and clients' narratives.

Apart from this, the approach to guidance is also changing, with research on the use of AI pointing to an initial process of sense-making, which could begin with either exploitative learning paths or exploratory learning paths, whereas tools supporting collaborative human AI sense-making facilitate transparency and user agency. In such an approach, this directs us to co-constructed career learning where the reasoning of clients is scaffolded with the use of AI evidence, such as the transformation of jobs

with task allocation, adjacency of skills, and selection methods.

In parallel, the OECD (2023, 2024-2025) documents that AI is shifting task content and increasing demand for management, social, and foundational digital skills in occupations with high AI exposure; it also highlights opportunities and risks for matching processes and public employment services (PES). Taken together, these insights suggest that guidance should prioritize human strengths - ethical judgment, empathy, and contextual understanding - while developing critical data literacy to read and challenge algorithmic outputs in recruitment, assessment, and learning systems. The central insight of Westman et al. (2021) is that AI can enhance career guidance only if counselors, students, and institutions develop the right *conditions* - skills, data ecosystems, ethical standards, and clarity of roles to use AI systems meaningfully and responsibly.

What does this mean for professional roles and competencies? Building on the NICE (2016) European Competence Standards (or other fresh national standards like the Finnish or Canadian) for the academic training of career practitioners, the keynote proposes an enhanced competency set for AI-present environments: (1) Algorithmic accountability & evaluation (able to interrogate data lineage, bias, error sources, and risk categorization in highrisk workplace AI); (2) Client-



facing AI literacy facilitation (coaching clients to understand algorithmic hiring, platform mediation, and their digital footprints); (3) Ethical codesign & consent (embedding informed consent, explainability, and recourse in guidance interventions); (4) Sociotechnical sensemaking (translating LMIS/ESCO signals into personalized career narratives across transitions); and (5) System stewardship (participating in service and policy design, including PES and schoolto work interfaces). These build directly on NICE's roles (Advisor, Professional, Specialist) while updating task profiles for AI-enabled contexts.

Crucially, career guidance and AI must be attentive to equity and social justice. Scholarship warns that AI-augmented recruitment and guidance can reinscribe inequities unless practitioners actively contest opaque screening, biased training data, and digital divides. Given documented variability in AI adoption and literacy across Europe, guidance should target inclusion: mid-career and older workers, SMEs, and regions with lower AI diffusion. Policy conversations led by ICCDPP (2025) and OECD (2023) now more clearly connect AI transitions with the need to scale guidance coverage and quality - especially in PES and adult learning *ecosystems* - to support fair transitions and prevent new forms of exclusion.

Three takeaways anchor the keynote's argument. *First, AI is not guidance*: LMIS dashboards, skills taxonomies, and generative tools can expand reach and insight, but the unique human value in career support remains ethical judgment, empathy, and dialogic sensemaking. *Second, competence renewal is urgent*: European and national frameworks imply concrete practitioner capabilities - from algorithmic evaluation to client-facing AI literacy and consent management - requiring updated curricula, supervision, and CPD. *Third, system stewardship matters*: Guidance professionals should help shape AI-augmented infrastructures (LMIS/ESCO, PES processes, schoolemployer linkages), ensuring



that governance, evaluation, and service design centre on human outcomes and social purpose.

In short, AI invites a rethink of the profession: from transactional, expert providing answers toward co-constructed career learning and support through complex transitions, so that technology enhances rather than undermines the civic and social mission of career guidance in Europe.

About the Expert

Dr. Tibor Bors Borbély-Pecze is a Hungarian expert in career guidance, lifelong learning policy, and employment services. With a PhD and habilitation in pedagogy, he has built a distinguished academic and policy-oriented career focused on the intersection of education, employment, and social development.

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Workshops

CZECH REPUBLIC

Career Development and Career Portfolio in the School Curriculum: Practical Inspirations

Martina Milotová, Petr Chalus, NPI Euroguidance Czechia, Czech Republic

The workshop *Career Development and Career Portfolio in the School Curriculum* focused on contemporary approaches to career development education in schools, with particular emphasis on the implementation of career portfolios as tools supporting pupils' personal growth, self-reflection, and career decision-making. The workshop combined theoretical background with practical examples and interactive activities that enabled participants to experience selected career education methods from the perspective of learners.

The workshop began by introducing the broader context of career development within contemporary education systems. It highlighted that

rapid social, technological, and labour market changes require schools not only to provide academic knowledge but also to develop pupils' self-awareness, adaptability, decision-making abilities, and lifelong career management skills. Participants discussed the increasing importance of career education as an integral component of school curricula rather than as a separate counselling activity delivered only at key transition points.

A substantial part of the workshop presented recent innovations in the Czech national curriculum framework. Participants were introduced to the ongoing curricular reform that has significantly strengthened the position of career



education within compulsory education. The presenters explained that the educational area formerly known as *Man and the World of Work* had been expanded into *Man, His Personality and the World of Work*. This change reflected a broader understanding of career development as a process closely connected with personal and social development, wellbeing, and lifelong learning. The revised curriculum places greater emphasis on developing pupils' career management skills, self-awareness, emotional resilience, communication, cooperation, ethical behaviour, and their ability to respond to the continuously changing labour market.

The workshop also introduced the revised educational field Personal and Social Education, where **career development had become one of the explicit educational objectives**. Participants became familiar with examples of new learning outcomes that encourage pupils to reflect on their own development, plan their future educational pathways, manage transitions between education and work, and systematically build their professional identity. Particular attention was devoted to one of the newly formulated learning outcomes, which requires pupils to

create and maintain a personal career portfolio that can be used in model situations related to career opportunities and future educational decisions. This example illustrated how career development had become embedded directly within the curriculum rather than remaining solely within counselling services.

The central theme of the workshop was the concept of the **career portfolio** as a practical educational tool supporting continuous personal and career development. The presenters demonstrated that the portfolio should not be understood merely as a collection of certificates or documents but rather as a dynamic instrument that supports self-reflection, competency development, educational planning, and informed career decision-making. Throughout the workshop, participants explored how portfolio work encourages pupils to document their achievements, collect evidence of learning, identify strengths and areas for improvement, formulate personal goals, and regularly evaluate their own progress.

Several methodological resources developed for Czech schools were presented during the workshop. These resources illustrated practical





approaches to implementing career education within everyday teaching practice. Participants worked with activities focused on identifying personal strengths, recognising available resources, mapping competencies, exploring interests and values, reflecting on educational experiences, and setting realistic personal and career goals. The workshop demonstrated that these activities can be naturally integrated into various school subjects and educational levels while supporting both personal development and career learning.

An important part of the programme consisted of experiential activities that allowed participants to work with selected portfolio techniques from the perspective of pupils. Through individual and collaborative exercises, participants experienced methods of self-assessment, competency mapping, reflection on previous learning experiences, identification of personal values and interests, and preparation of simple action plans for future development. These activities illustrated how portfolio work can promote meaningful reflection and help learners understand the relationship between their school

experiences, personal development, and future educational or career aspirations.

The second major part of the workshop introduced **Start iD**, an innovative digital portfolio platform designed to support pupils' professional identity and career development. The presenters demonstrated how digital technologies can facilitate systematic portfolio work throughout students' educational journeys. Participants became familiar with the structure and functions of the platform, which enables learners to document their educational achievements, competencies, work experiences, extracurricular activities, interests, and future plans within one comprehensive digital environment. The application also supports the preparation of CVs, career portfolios, self-presentations, and applications for internships or part-time employment.

The workshop presented the six thematic sections that form the structure of the Start iD portfolio:

- **My Future**, focusing on dreams, goals, career aspirations, and action planning;

- **My Self-Knowledge**, supporting self-reflection, competency mapping, personality exploration, strengths, weaknesses, and personal values;
- **My Studies**, documenting educational achievements, school projects, feedback, certificates, and evidence of learning;
- **My Experience**, recording work experience, internships, volunteering, projects, and other practical experiences;
- **My Hobbies**, presenting interests, leisure activities, achievements, and competencies developed outside school;
- **Me and the Labour Market**, supporting labour market orientation, career exploration, preparation of CVs and cover letters, interview preparation, understanding future labour market trends, and career management skills.

The presenters demonstrated how the platform allows students to prepare different versions of their portfolio by selecting specific content for sharing with teachers, educational institutions, or potential employers. Participants also learned about additional features of the application, online career counselling, networking opportunities, and access to information about internships, part-time jobs, and career opportunities. The digital environment illustrated how career portfolio work can become a continuous process that accompanies learners throughout their education and supports the gradual development of their professional identity.

Throughout the workshop, participants discussed practical aspects of implementing career portfolios within schools. The discussion focused on curriculum integration, teacher support, student motivation, assessment, and opportunities for connecting portfolio work with career guidance services. Examples of good practice from Czech schools demonstrated that systematic portfolio work can strengthen pupils' ownership of learning, improve self-reflection,

support educational transitions, and develop competencies needed for lifelong career management.

The workshop concluded with a reflective discussion in which participants shared their experiences with the presented activities and considered possibilities for adapting similar approaches within their own educational settings. The combination of curricular innovations, methodological resources, experiential learning activities, and digital portfolio tools provided participants with practical inspiration for strengthening career development education in schools. The workshop demonstrated that career education can become an integral part of everyday teaching practice and contribute significantly to pupils' personal development, educational success, and readiness for future learning and work.

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CROATIA

From Digital Hobbies to Career Capital: Informal Learning, Transferable Skills and Networks in the Digital World

Jana Kiralj Lacković, PhD, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Agriculture

Aim and Content of the Workshop

Hobbies are freely chosen leisure activities that play an important role in personal well-being and identity formation. In the digital age, people increasingly develop skills, build identities and form networks through interest-driven online activities – from gaming and content creation to app-based learning, online communities and collaborative platforms. Even hobbies performed primarily offline tend to have a digital dimension today, as those who enjoy them gather in specialised online spaces to share knowledge, seek advice, and connect with peers.

This workshop explored why career practitioners should pay closer attention to their clients'

hobbies. Six key reasons were discussed: (1) hobbies are a largely untapped source of client potential; (2) hobbies develop transferable skills that can be applied in professional contexts; (3) hobby communities generate social capital through networking and weak ties; (4) knowing what clients care about in their free time deepens the counselling relationship; (5) discussing hobbies builds trust and openness between the practitioner and the client; and (6) employers increasingly consider candidates' extracurricular activities when evaluating fit and character.

The workshop pursued the following goals:

- Recognising digital hobbies as forms of informal learning.



- Identifying transferable skills that emerge from digital participation.
- Understanding how online communities function as networking spaces and sources of social capital.
- Discussing how hobby-based experiences can be translated into career capital.
- Reflecting on the practical implications for career guidance.

Participants worked in small groups of five to eight people, drawing on their own personal hobbies throughout the session. This hands-on approach ensured the learning was grounded in lived experience rather than abstraction or imagination.

The first activity invited participants to list their hobbies on individual post-it notes, one per note, as many as they wished. This served both as an icebreaker and as the raw material for subsequent tasks.

The second activity asked participants to categorise their hobbies along a spectrum of three types. Fully offline hobbies are those conducted exclusively without digital technology, with no connection to online communities or information-seeking. Hybrid hobbies are primarily practised offline but benefit from digital tools for some aspects – and are typically discussed, shared or supported through online groups and resources. Digital hobbies are those in which the core activity is inseparable from digital technology, and which are strongly tied to online communities and continuous information exchange.

The third activity focused on transferable skills: for each hybrid or digital hobby, participants identified what skills were being developed, what behaviours were practised, whether any forms of leadership or responsibility emerged, and how these could be translated into CV or job interview language. This was followed by a

short, simulated job interview in which volunteer participants were invited to demonstrate exactly that – drawing on hobby-based experiences to present their competencies in a professional context. The wider group was actively involved as observers, tasked with identifying the key words and phrases used during the interview that reflected the underlying skills and competencies tied to the hobbies discussed.

A fourth activity examined the networking dimension, exploring what online communities were involved, the nature of any collaboration, and when hobby networking could meaningfully contribute to professional opportunities.

Key Outcomes and Insights

The workshop generated several important insights:

- The variety of hobbies among participants was remarkably wide, reflecting the diversity of clients that career practitioners encounter.
- The same hobby can be practised in fundamentally different ways by different individuals, meaning that practitioners should not assume the category – the client's specific engagement is what matters.



- The division of hobbies into three discrete categories proved to be an oversimplification: in practice, hobby digitality resembles a continuum, and participants found it more useful to think in terms of a spectrum rather than fixed types.
- Many hobbies today have at least one digital component, reflecting how thoroughly technology has permeated leisure life.
- Translating hobbies into professional language (CV entries, portfolio items or interview responses) was identified as the most practically valuable skill. This process requires careful reflection on the underlying activities and competencies involved, and career practitioners' role is to guide clients through it.
- Digital hobby communities frequently function as genuine networks, with reputation, collaboration and peer learning creating real professional value, particularly for clients who may not have formal work experience to draw upon.

Main Conclusions

Career practitioners can and should recognise, encourage and validate informal learning that takes place through clients' digital hobbies. The workshop made a case for systematically incorporating hobby-based exploration into career guidance practice – not as a “nice to have” element, but as a meaningful avenue for uncovering human capital, technical competencies, social capital and identity capital that might otherwise remain invisible.

This approach is particularly valuable for clients with limited or no formal work experience – young people, career changers and those returning to the labour market – for whom hobbies may represent the richest available source of demonstrable skills and networks. Rather than viewing hobbies as a side note, practitioners can learn to read them as evidence of motivation, self-directed learning, collaboration and problem-solving.

The workshop framework – mapping hobbies along the offline-digital spectrum, identifying transferable skills, and exploring networking potential – offers a practical, replicable structure that practitioners can adapt for individual sessions or group workshops. The model connecting digital hobbies to career capital through four dimensions (human capital, social capital, identity capital and career capital) provides a theoretically grounded yet accessible lens for this work.

The session aligned with the broader seminar theme of career guidance in the digital world by highlighting informal, intrinsically motivated digital participation as a legitimate and under-utilised pathway to professional development. It invites practitioners to expand their understanding of what counts as learning, what counts as experience, and ultimately what counts as career readiness.

About the Expert

Jana Kiralj Lacković - University of Zagreb Faculty of Agriculture: After receiving her master's degree in psychology, Jana Kiralj Lacković began her career as a research and teaching assistant at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. During this time, she also worked as a career counsellor at the faculty's Centre for Career Management, helping students recognise and develop their career management skills. Through community-based learning and support, she worked with marginalised groups - such as refugees and people with disabilities - on their career development. For two years after earning her PhD, she served as a Human Resource Business Partner in a large Croatian production company, leading and supporting all human resource management processes. In early 2025, she rejoined academia as an Assistant Professor (PhD) at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Agriculture, where she is currently engaged in several research projects and teaches classes to six study groups across three University of Zagreb faculties.

HUNGARY

AI in Practice: Digital Career Literacy and Ethical Guidance Skills

Dr. Tibor Bors Borbély-Peczé - ELTE, Hungarian Pedagogical Society

Keywords: AI in guidance, digital career literacy, LMIS, ethics, AI literacy, lifelong guidance

Artificial intelligence is increasingly embedded in the systems, platforms, and public- and private sector services that shape how Europeans learn, work, and make career decisions. From labour market information systems and skills matching algorithms to automated recruitment, adaptive learning environments, and personalised career exploration tools, AI-enabled technologies now influence the full spectrum of lifelong guidance interactions. For career development practitioners, this shift presents both promising opportunities and significant professional challenges. On the one hand, AI offers new ways to widen

access, provide personalized support at scale, and generate deeper labour market insights. On the other hand, it raises urgent questions about ethics, data justice, transparency, algorithmic bias, and the preservation of the human qualities that remain central to effective guidance: empathy, contextual judgment, trust, and relational depth.

This 90-minute interactive workshop is developed for career guidance practitioners, counsellors, and adult education professionals interested in developing the necessary practical skills required to practice in this changing field with assurance and, simply put, to translate the technological and technological policy develop-





ments to practice, keeping in view the latest policy developments in Europe and even emerging research and practice in the field of public employment services, education, and learning systems. The workshop will also highlight the importance of career literacy for the clients themselves in the context of an AI-driven labour market.

The workshop starts with developing an overall comprehension of exactly what AI is and, just as importantly, exactly what AI is not. While other workshops might concentrate on the technology side, this workshop uses a practice-centred approach. For example, one might look at the various kinds of AI already used in career development, including things like recommender systems in job search websites, AI in CV analysis, chatbots, AI-supported self-assessment, and predictive analytics in forecasting. By doing this, the various means by which AI makes decisions, as well as the data on which these decisions are based, and at exactly what points human input is critical, are explored. By the end, the participant is in a significantly better place to see the difference between legitimate opportunities for AI support and scenarios in which AI might, in fact, potentially increase inequalities or oversimplify things that, as human beings, we simply do not. The second segment of this section, the workshop, delves into digital career literacy (see Dig-

Comp 3.0), a notion that is undoubtedly evolving into a crucial and integral part of practice, especially given the experience and interaction clients, irrespective of their ages, are bound to have with AI as they seek employment and/or plan their learning and career paths, and so on. Here, practitioners are exposed to a workable model on key learnings clients could benefit from, such as understanding algorithmic decision processes, comprehending outcomes of various AI learning and labour market analyses, understanding the credibility of different career platforms, cyber security, and, most importantly, becoming critically aware of their digital footprint and its implications on employability, and so on, through practical hands-on micro-tasks where professionals can learn how to work through clients who will benefit from learning about such aspects. For instance, a group might have to work through an AI-driven skills matching engine, discuss multiple LMIS visualizations, and so forth.

The third, and final, part of this workshop concerns the ethical and people-centred integration of AI technologies in guidance practice. By largely building upon established European and international guidelines for the ethics of guidance, participants will work through the sorts of case scenarios that emerge for guidance practitioners working with AI technologies in



client interactions. Case examples may include areas such as working with AI technologies in client interactions in the education sector, youth guidance, public employment services, and adult-focused career guidance. They may include negotiating the use of AI-technology-based client interest assessments for vulnerable groups, recognizing bias in AI technologies that may have been used for client labour market assessments, and issues of transparency related to AI-based client assessments for career ideas.

Participants collaborate on mapping human-AI client journeys, a technique through which guidance professionals understand when AI can enhance the process and when human intervention needs to take precedence. The visual maps identify points in the journey at which AI can be drawn upon to support exploration, widen options, or make labour market information more accessible, and at which points relational, contextualised human support is needed to guarantee autonomy, equity, and informed decision-making. In this task, the practitioners are advised of real ways to design blended guidance services whereby technology enhances rather than replaces the human relationship.

Issues of human value are prominent in the workshop, and the key human value emphasized is that of empathy, professional judgment, contex-

tualization, empowerment, etc. Rather than presenting AI as a force that replaces human values, the workshop will show how human values can work alongside AI through a reflective approach. Participants are encouraged to work out their own approach to a professional ethics of AI, including key elements of transparency, inclusivity, sensitivity to systemic bias, and client empowerment. National employment agencies, digital youth information platforms, projects funded by the Erasmus+ program, or ESF+ are also presented as the context for the application of such an ethics.

The workshop closes with the very practical toolkit of ready-to-use techniques, including advanced conversation prompts, reflective questions, group facilitation ideas, and introductory activities for clients who feel intimidated by AI. These are designed to immediately help practitioners integrate topics related to AI into their daily work while continuing to build trust, reflection, and human connection.

Ultimately, our aim is to work toward the goal of de-mystifying AI for career guidance professionals and ensuring that they have all they need to be an integral part of making the future of guidance what we want it to be. By building this level of technical and ethical understanding, we contribute to an EU guidance force that can be assured of leveraging AI for increasing inclusion, augmenting conversations, and empowering citizens - alongside an unwavering commitment to safeguarding the dignity and autonomy that is at the very heart of lifelong careers.

About the Expert

Dr. Tibor Bors Borbély-Pecze is a Hungarian expert in career guidance, lifelong learning policy, and employment services. With a PhD and habilitation in pedagogy, he has built a distinguished academic and policy-oriented career focused on the intersection of education, employment, and social development.

LATVIA

AI-Enhanced Guidance: Four Tools. Five Lenses. One Young Person.

Dace Briede-Zālīte, Director of Skills, Capability & Employee Engagement at Tet; Chair of the Latvian Career Development Support Association (LKAAA)

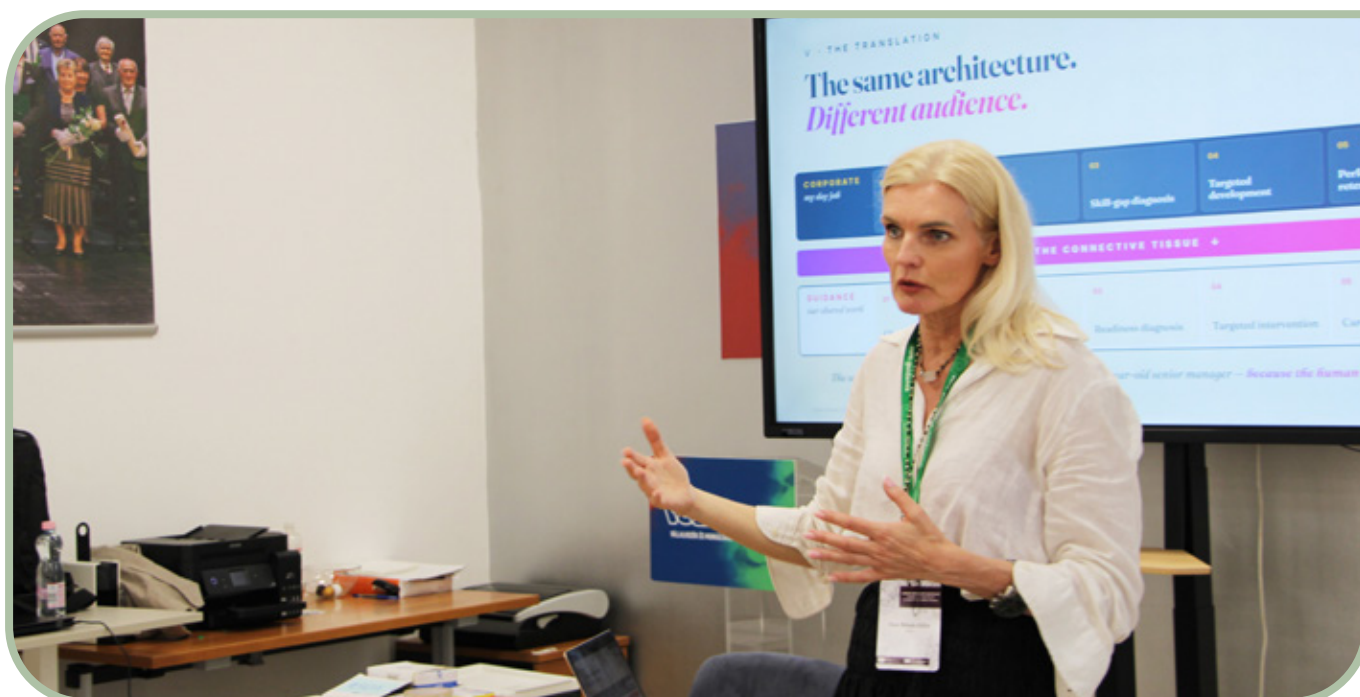
Summary: AI-Enhanced Guidance — Four Tools, Five Lenses, One Young Person

At the Euroguidance Cross Border Seminar 2026 in Budapest, Dace Briede-Zālīte, Assoc CIPD — Director of Skills, Capability & Employee Engagement at Tet telecommunications and Chair of the Latvian Career Development Support Association (LKAAA) — delivered a hands-on workshop entitled “*AI-Enhanced Guidance: Four Tools. Five Lenses. One Young Person.*” The session featured a live demonstration of a GDPR-anonymised counselling case supervised in real time by Fathom AI, followed by a group debate on the ethical limits of AI in guidance. Participants concluded that AI is best understood as *connective*

tissue freeing counsellors for the deeply human parts of the work, that triangulation across multiple AI models beats over-reliance on any single one, and that self-supervision through AI is now democratised for every practitioner — regardless of organisational size or budget.

Retrospective: AI-Enhanced Guidance — Four Tools, Five Lenses, One Young Person

The workshop focused on how career counsellors can adopt the working methods of a corporate strategy consultant — and let AI carry the operational load. Speaking from three vantage points — as Director of Skills, Capability & Employee Engagement at state-owned telecom-



munications company Tet, as Chair of the Latvian Career Development Support Association (LKAAA) and volunteer with the Latvian State Probation Service — Dace Briede Zālīte introduced a practical method built on four orchestrated AI tools, five global consulting lenses, and a single client at the centre.

Standing on Both Sides of the Labour-Market Bridge

Dace opened the session by establishing the two professional vantage points from which she works every day. As **Director of Skills, Capability & Employee Engagement at Tet**, Latvia's leading telecommunications and technology company, she observes the labour market through the employer's lens — how organisations assess job seekers' readiness, where capability gaps appear, and what "good" actually looks like. At the same time, as a **career counsellor, Chair of LKAAA, IAEVG National Correspondent, Licensed Goal Mapping® Trainer & Practitioner, Accredited DISC Practitioner, and volunteer with the Latvian State Probation Service**, she works the other end of the spectrum — supporting young people, career-changers, and clients with complicated pro-

files whose route into the labour market is rarely linear. Standing on both sides of this bridge, she argued, is what shapes the method she shared in Budapest. Drawing on twenty years of corporate experience across Shell, SEB, RSA Insurance Group, and Tet, and on her CIPD Level 7 qualification from the University of Westminster (2024), she presented an approach grounded in the question: *what works in business — translated for career guidance?*

Four Tools, Five Lenses, One Young Person

The core of the workshop was a practical, replicable method built on three building blocks. The **four AI tools she orchestrates** include Genspark (her AI tool of choice for research, presentation design, and writing — used to build the workshop deck itself), Perplexity (for cross-checking and second opinions), ChatGPT (for human-tone rewriting), and Gemini (for multilingual native translation of client-facing summaries). The **five consultant lenses** — McKinsey, Boston Consulting Group (BCG), Deloitte, Forrester, and Gartner — are used to triangulate career questions when global context matters; rarely all five at once; rather, they are selected as relevant: McKinsey for strategic outlook, BCG for



transformation and AI-productivity, Deloitte's Human Capital Trends for workforce and skills perspective, Forrester for customer-experience, and Gartner for emerging-technology radar. The entire method, she stressed, exists to serve **one young person** — in their language, with their context, on their timeline.

Live AI-Supervised Counselling Demonstration

A central highlight of the workshop was a **live demonstration of a real career counselling case** with an anonymised 16-year-old client, all identifying details removed in line with GDPR. Throughout the session, Dace used **Fathom AI** as a live supervision partner, recording, transcribing, and analysing the session in real time. Participants observed both the conversation and the AI's view of the conversation unfold on screen simultaneously. The most discussed moment came when she asked Fathom directly: "What could I do better as a career counsellor?" The AI returned strikingly specific, timestamped feedback — praising her ability to help the client self-observe concretely, to translate personality traits into real-life consequences, and to keep

the conversation practical, while flagging the need for more concise framing and sharper end-of-session summarising. This was, she noted, the kind of feedback a counsellor would normally wait weeks for from a peer supervisor — delivered in seconds.

Group Discussion: Advantages and Ethical Limits

The room then engaged in a structured debate about where AI helps and where it harms in guidance. Participants converged on several **advantages**: AI removes administrative burden, freeing counsellors for the human work only they can do; real labour-market data replaces outdated curricula; multilingual one-page summaries close the language gap for students and parents; and self-supervision becomes accessible to every practitioner regardless of budget. They also drew clear **ethical lines**: AI must never decide for the client — human-in-the-loop is non-negotiable; anonymisation is mandatory at all times; triangulation across multiple models must replace blind trust in any single one; and over-reliance must not be allowed to dull the counsellor's own listening muscles.





What Guidance and the Corporate World Can Teach Each Other

Drawing on her dual role, Dace framed the cross-pollination between sectors explicitly. From corporate to guidance, counsellors can adopt the disciplines of measuring outcomes rather than sessions, segmenting before the conversation, using capability frameworks, building follow-up cadence, and anchoring advice in real labour-market data. From guidance to corporate, business leaders can learn to see the whole person, practise non-judgmental inquiry, take the long view, treat meaning as seriously as performance, and meet the person where they are — lessons especially powerful when working with complicated profiles encountered through volunteer work at the State Probation Service.

Three Conclusions for the Profession

The session crystallised into three key conclusions. First, AI in guidance is best understood as connective tissue — it does not replace the counsellor, it removes the friction around the counsellor. Second, triangulation beats automation: orchestrating four tools and five consulting

lenses is not over-engineering, but the discipline that protects the young person from any single model's bias. Third, self-supervision is now democratised — tools like Fathom AI mean every counsellor, regardless of organisational size or budget, can receive specific, timestamped, evidence-based feedback after every session. For the profession, this represents a profound shift in professional development.

Through this combination of practical method, live AI-supervised demonstration, and group ethical debate, the workshop equipped participants with both a working toolkit and a critical lens — embodying the speaker's guiding principle: *"What works in business — translated for career guidance."*

About the Expert

Dace Briede-Zālīte is Chair of the Latvian Career Development Support Association (LKAAA) and serves as Director of Training and Productivity at Tet, Latvia's leading telecommunications and technology company. Her work focuses on career guidance practices, practitioner training, inclusive education, youth employability, and leadership development. Effectively bridging corporate practice, education, and social responsibility, she promotes the view that career is not only about employment but about realizing one's potential through lifelong growth and meaningful contribution.

Dace holds a Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development Level 7 qualification in Human Resource Management from the University of Westminster (2024) and is a licensed international "Goal Mapping" trainer. She is the IAEVG national correspondent for Latvia and contributed to the Global Career Month European Conference panel in 2025. In recognition of her contribution to advancing career guidance and personal development, Dace Briede-Zālīte has been honoured with the Latvian National Career Guidance Award in 2020.

POLAND

From Test Results to Real Decisions: The Evolving Role of Career Guidance in the Age of AI

Sylwia Korycka-Fortuna and Julia Rozbicka, Europass & Euroguidance Polska, Foundation for the Development of the Education System

Workshop Objective

As digital career assessment tools become increasingly sophisticated, career practitioners face an important question: What remains uniquely human in the guidance process?

The workshop *“From Test Results to Real Decisions”* was designed to explore this challenge. Led by Julia Rozbicka and Sylwia Korycka-Fortuna from the National Europass and Euroguidance Centre Poland, the session focused on responsible interpretation of digital career assessment results and the role of counsellors in transforming information into meaningful career decisions.

The central message of the workshop was simple: **Assessment results do not create career decisions. Conversations do.**

While digital tools can increase self-awareness, identify patterns and provide valuable insights, they cannot replace the reflective process through which people understand what those insights mean in the context of their own lives.

Workshop Content and Methodology

The session combined participant reflection, group discussion and practical interpretation exercises based on real-life career assessment scenarios inspired by Career Direct® reports.

The workshop opened with an interactive Menti-meter activity exploring participants' experiences with digital assessments.

When asked what clients typically expect from career assessments, participants highlighted:

- quick answers and solutions,
- self-understanding,
- identification of strengths,
- feedback and insights,
- clear career direction.

Participants also reflected on their own concerns as career counsellors. The most common fears included:

- misinterpreting results,
- missing important aspects of the client's situation,
- oversimplifying complex realities,
- limiting a client's potential through overly narrow interpretations,
- becoming too influential or directive in the counselling process.

When discussing the biggest risks associated with digital career assessments, participants identified:

- lack of empathy,
- AI-generated hallucinations,
- stereotyping,
- loss of individuality,
- cybersecurity concerns,
- oversimplification of complex career decisions.

Following this discussion, participants explored the most common mistakes observed in assessment-based guidance, including treating results as objective truth, focusing on professions rather than people, and failing to translate reports into meaningful action.

A key element of the workshop was a structured group exercise in which participants analysed assessment profiles and developed counselling strategies. The goal was not to learn a specific tool, but to practice responsible interpretation.

Each group examined patterns, strengths, tensions, potential risks and missing information before proposing guidance approaches and next steps for the client.

Key Outcomes and Insights

One of the most interesting observations emerged from a deliberate workshop design choice. Unknown to participants, two groups were given the same client profile to analyse independently.

Despite working separately, both groups arrived at similar conclusions. Rather than focusing on specific career recommendations, they emphasised the importance of:

- understanding the client's broader life context,
- exploring readiness for change,
- creating space for reflection,
- gathering additional information before suggesting career directions,
- building a guidance process rather than providing immediate answers.

This outcome reinforced a key message of the workshop: assessment results alone rarely provide enough information for responsible career guidance.

Participants consistently recognised that factors such as stress, financial pressure, life stage, confidence and personal circumstances significantly influence how people interpret results and make decisions.





Another important insight was the growing confidence participants expressed regarding the future role of career professionals. Rather than viewing artificial intelligence as a threat, many participants recognised that technological advancement may actually increase the value of human-centred guidance.

As digital tools become more accessible, the need for interpretation, contextualisation and ethical reflection becomes even more important.

Main Conclusions

One of the strongest themes emerging from the Cross Border Seminar was the distinction between what technology can do and what remains the responsibility of the human practitioner.

AI can identify patterns, process large amounts of information and generate recommendations. Career counsellors help people understand what those recommendations mean.

The future role of career practitioners may therefore be shifting from being experts who provide answers to becoming co-navigators who help clients make sense of an increasingly complex information landscape.

The workshop demonstrated that effective career guidance is not about matching people to professions. It is about supporting conscious, realistic and personally meaningful decision-making.

Perhaps the most important conclusion is that career professionals should have greater confidence in the value of their own work.

Technology can support reflection. It cannot replace human understanding.

As one of the key messages of the seminar suggested: **AI delivers answers. Career guidance helps people make sense of them.** People rarely make their most important decisions because they have more information. They make them, when they understand themselves better.

References and Resources

- Career Direct® assessment framework
- Euroguidance Network resources
- Cross Border Seminar 2026, Budapest
- Workshop presentation: *From Test Results to Real Decisions: Moving from Assessment Reports to Meaningful Career Conversations*



About the Experts

Sylwia Korycka-Fortuna is the ACC coach and certified practitioner of FRIS® and Career Direct®. With over seven years of hands-on experience in career guidance and professional transitions, she supports managers, specialists, students and individuals re-entering the labour market in navigating change with clarity and confidence.

She has delivered more than 400 individual coaching processes and over 1,000 hours of workshops in schools, companies and international settings. A member of the National Europass and Euroguidance Centre at the Foundation for the Development of the Education System, she is a conference speaker and author of expert publications commissioned by educational institutions. Drawing on 17 years of prior corporate experience, she combines strategic insight into labour market realities with structured, person-centred coaching. Her approach integrates diagnostic tools with practical action planning, ensuring measurable outcomes and informed career decisions.

Julia Rozbicka is a Communication and professional development specialist working at the Foundation for the Development of the Educa-

tion System. She co-creates the activities of the National Europass & Euroguidance Centre, where she is responsible for image communication, employer branding, and creating content promoting competence development, conscious career planning, and European educational and professional mobility tools. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from SWPS University and is currently studying human resource management at the same university, which allows her to combine her knowledge of human nature with HR practice and an understanding of the needs of the modern labour market. She holds a Career Angels – Career Consultant certificate, confirming her expertise in the diagnosis of professional goals, analysis of job offers and the labour market, application strategies, effective job search (including the hidden labour market), personalisation of LinkedIn profiles, networking, preparation for interviews and job crafting. In her work, she focuses on strategies for communicating professional competence and potential, as well as the ethical use of artificial intelligence in consulting and recruitment. Her mission is to support others in consciously building their career path – so that they can not only find a job but understand why that particular job makes sense for them.

PORTUGAL

With or Without You: Do We Still Need Humans in Career Guidance?

Tatiana Fernandes Pereira, Psychologist, D. Dinis School Cluster – Leiria, EduQA

Workshop 8, 'With or Without You: Do We Still Need Humans in Career Guidance?', took its inspiration from the playful intersection between a song by the globally renowned band U2 and the central theme of this Cross Border Seminar: the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in career guidance processes. Our aim was to challenge participants to reflect critically, strategically and ethically on our professional role in an era characterised by the rapid growth, widespread adoption and increasing influence of AI in everyday life, and, particularly, within our own pro-

fessional contexts - whether in education, research, counselling or career guidance practice.

To engage participants from the outset, we opened the session with a series of icebreaker questions. Rather than relying on Mentimeter®, we deliberately adopted an "old-school" approach to audience participation, using coloured cards and a show of hands. Questions included: "If you were experiencing the worst day of your life, who would you call first: AI or another person?" and "If you had to rely on a



single piece of advice for a life-changing decision, would you choose advice from a person or from AI?”

This led us to the central question underpinning the workshop: AI knows more and more, but when life becomes difficult, why do we still turn to people? Although simple, the poll produced clear results that echoed existing research: while preferences depend on several factors, human mediation tends to be favoured over AI when supporting major decisions - particularly those involving responsibility, uncertainty regarding outcomes, or situations where mistakes may have significant consequences (e.g., Wesche et al., 2024; Jin et al., 2025). Among these are decisions concerning career pathways, educational choices and career transitions. This reality calls for a conscious, technically informed, strategic and ethical reflection on our role in an age marked by the rapid expansion of Artificial Intelligence in both our daily lives and our professional practice, whether in education, research, counselling or career guidance.

The COVID-19 pandemic proved to be a major catalyst for the adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT) within career guidance services. Although AI had already been evolving rapidly before 2020, the pandemic undoubtedly accelerated its implementation across multiple sectors, particularly healthcare, education and organisational management (Wilson et al., 2024). Since then, the debate surrounding the use of Artificial Intelligence in vocational and career guidance has become increasingly polarised, with strong arguments both in favour of and against its integration into professional practice.

To frame this workshop, however, we drew primarily on the recent study by Zhang, Wang and Chen (2026): ‘Can AI Be a Good Counsellor? Comparing the Effectiveness of AI and Human Career

Counselling’. Rather than advocating the replacement of human career counsellors by AI, the authors argue that organisations should view AI as a specialised tool capable of supporting the evidence-informed redesign of professional practices and service delivery. Accordingly, they propose the adoption of a comprehensive hybrid model that intentionally combines the strengths of both human expertise and Artificial Intelligence.

Building on these premises, the second part of the workshop adopted a practical and reflective approach. Participants were divided into small groups and invited to work from a shared framework of discussion topics. We identified eleven key stages representing a flexible roadmap for a typical vocational and career guidance process. The aim was to examine, for each stage, the respective strengths of AI and human intervention. The discussion focused on the following dimensions: (1) Initial engagement and relationship building; (2) Self-awareness; (3) Skills assessment; (4) Exploration of occupations and career pathways; (5) Labour market information; (6) Decision-making; (7) Action planning; (8) Active opportunity seeking; (9) Emotional management of career transitions; (10) Follow-up and monitoring; and (11) Inclusion and equity.

As this was one of the final workshops of the seminar, participants were able to draw on the many ideas and reflections gathered throughout the previous sessions. This resulted in a rich body of insights that, in many respects, provided an overall synthesis of the discussions that characterised CBS 2026. A clear consensus emerged regarding the value and relevance of AI in career guidance practice, particularly its ability to process large volumes of occupational and labour market information efficiently; to support activities that foster self-awareness and the exploration of interests; to assist with information gathering and analysis; and even to contribute to greater cost-effectiveness.

At the same time, participants were equally unanimous in recognising the current limitations of the technology and the continuing importance of human mediation throughout the guidance process. Certain human qualities remain irreplaceable: genuine empathy and emotional understanding; interpersonal trust and emotional support; the ability to interpret emotions and non-verbal cues; the integration of lived experience and personal narratives; a deep understanding of each individual's context; and, ultimately, the fact that professional and ethical responsibility for guidance and recommendations has a human face. These uniquely human capabilities underpin every stage of the career guidance process.

Overall, this exercise demonstrated the practical benefits of adopting a hybrid career guidance model - AI + Human Career Practitioner - allowing the complementary strengths of both forms of support to be combined in an intentional and meaningful way.

We concluded the workshop by celebrating this idea of a conscious partnership with music and good humour through a CBS karaoke session. Drawing on detailed prompts provided by participants who had shared in these days of learning, collaboration and even the summer heat, ChatGPT® generated song lyrics with the appropriate rhyme and rhythm, while the Mureka® app transformed them into music. The result was an irresistibly catchy song that left everyone smiling. In the end, perhaps this is the most important message of all: when AI is guided by human intention, expertise and judgement, its greatest potential lies not in replacing people, but in bringing them closer together, strengthening relationships and deepening shared experiences.

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About the Expert

Tatiana Fernandes – psychologist, specialist in Clinical and Health Psychology and in School Psychology, with advanced expertise in Inclusive Education and a Master's degree in Special Education, she has been working in the school context since 2005. She has played a key role in the structuring, implementation, and monitoring of projects in the field of Inclusive Education, the development of Peer Tutoring and Mentoring programs, as well as in career guidance practices from a developmental perspective, in both primary and secondary education.

Her work includes the development of employability skills with final-year students of Vocational Courses, collaboration with families in the context of guidance processes, and the reception and career guidance of Refugee Youth and Unaccompanied Foreign Minors - these have been highlighted as best practices within her professional activity.

SERBIA

Digital Tools in Career Guidance and Counselling – Exploring Careers Through Innovation

Jelena Stefanović - Swiss funded project "Education to Employment", NIRAS Germany

Milica Lekić - Job info centre Novi Sad, Centre for Youth Work

Marko Cenić - Job info centre Pirot, Association "Osveženje"

Aim and Content

The workshop aimed to explore how digital tools can support career guidance and counselling (CGC) by strengthening self-awareness, career exploration, and informed decision-making. Participants were introduced to a range of digital instruments developed and implemented within the Swiss-funded Education to Employment (E2E) initiative, implemented by NIRAS Germany in Serbia, including digital personality, interest, and competency assessment tests, and

virtual reality (VR) simulations. The session combined presentations, interactive discussions, and group work. Participants reflected on the role of digitalization in CGC, learned about the purpose and structure of the digital tests and VR tool, and discussed their potential application in different counselling contexts. Special attention was given to the development process behind these innovations and to the importance of balancing technological solutions with professional counselling practice.



Key Outcomes and Insights

The Mentimeter results at the beginning of the workshops showed that most participants already use digital tools in their professional practice and reported moderate to high confidence in adopting new technologies. They agreed that digital tools can increase young people's engagement in career guidance by improving efficiency, access to information, innovation, and overall accessibility. However, participants also expressed concerns about de-humanization, reduced personal interaction, information reliability, privacy, cybersecurity, and overreliance on technology. Overall, there was a clear consensus that digital tools should complement, not replace, face-to-face counseling, preserving a human-centred approach to career guidance.

Participants had a chance to hear more about the project and ongoing initiatives, including an established network of 11 Job Info Centers in Serbia that provide a holistic CGC service package aimed at supporting users in self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decision-making, and the transition process. Digital assessments used in these centers can provide structured and standardized information about an individual's personality traits, interests, and competencies. Multilevel assessment done through Identity-Fi and WayFi tests was presented as a starting point for counselling conversations, or support in career orientation, rather than as instruments that determine a person's future career.

The presentation stressed how such tools can increase engagement, especially among young people, by offering interactive and immediate feedback, and secure more reliable and objective assessment in the career guidance process. Furthermore, the presentation of Basic Check demonstrated the value of competency assessment in career planning, where standardized implementation conditions are essential to ensure comparability and reliability of results.



Participants, through group work, recognized that competency assessments can help identify strengths and development areas relevant to education, training, and employment pathways. Furthermore, the group identified several key advantages and challenges. Digital tests are recognized for saving time, providing excellent baseline data for discussion, and engaging young people. However, their limitations include a lack of personal touch, excessive length, the risk of demotivating clients with poor results, and a dependence on the user's digital and general literacy. Ultimately, these tests cannot function as standalone solutions, the presence of a career counsellor remains indispensable for interpreting data, managing emotional impact, and providing a human touch.

VR simulations generated considerable interest as an innovative way to expose individuals to work tasks and occupational environments. The discussion focused on how immersive experiences can support career exploration, particularly for young people who have limited opportunities to observe workplaces directly. At the same time, participants acknowledged practical considerations such as equipment costs, technical requirements, accessibility,

and the need for facilitator support. The participants identified the following items as positive aspects of VR as digital tool: time savings, availability of information, speed of access to information, comparative analysis of results and information, the possibility of safe and free testing of jobs and occupations, instant results and the possibility of combining with other tests, while as negative aspects they noted the limiting factors of the test, the limited number of areas of work, as well as the expensive maintenance and small number of occupations of VR devices.

Through group work, participants also identified additional digital tools that support their work, such as MS Teams, Google Meet, and AI. On one side, these tools secure broader geographical coverage of CGC services (online work), accessibility, save time, and secure more efficient work, especially with AI. On the other side, some disadvantages are the costs for better models/applications, misuse of information, or hallucination with AI, and the reliability of information.

The facilitators emphasized that technology cannot replace professional judgement, empathy, communication, and ethical practice. Effective career guidance is still dependent on career professionals who should secure critical thinking and reflective practice, creativity, good communication, and collaboration. **A joint insight is that digital tools should be integrated into holistic counselling processes that help individuals understand themselves, explore opportunities, make decisions, and manage transitions.**

Main Conclusions

The workshop concluded that digital tools can significantly enrich career guidance services when used thoughtfully and responsibly. Participants identified several advantages: increased engagement, faster access to assessment results, structured information for counselling



conversations, and opportunities for experiential career exploration through VR. These tools can support practitioners in working with diverse target groups, including students, job seekers, and individuals in career transitions.

At the same time, participants agreed that digital tools should not be viewed as standalone solutions. Effective implementation requires trained counsellors, clear interpretation of results, attention to ethical considerations, and awareness of potential limitations such as digital access and technical barriers. The most successful approach is a blended model that combines digital innovation with human-centered counselling practice.

The workshop also reinforced the importance of collaboration among career centres, schools, employers, and community organizations in developing and applying innovative CGC services. The Serbian experience presented through



the E2E initiative demonstrated how coordinated efforts can expand access to modern career support and strengthen connections between education and the labour market.

References or Resources for Further Reading

Education to Employment: <https://znanjemdo-posla.rs/en/>

Job Info Center Network: <https://jobinfo.rs/trazioci-posla/informisi-se/>

The career development handbook. Tristram Hooley, Rosie Alexander, Gill Frigerio

About the Experts

Jelena Stefanović, Milica Lekić, and Marko Cenić are dedicated professionals shaping the future of career guidance in Serbia within the Education to Employment project.

Jelena (MA in Social Work, Dipl. in Gest. Psychotherapy) is a counsellor and component



leader, leading national initiatives under the Swiss Development Cooperation. She coordinates career centers across Serbia, supports the development of local and national policies, and develops CGC instruments.

Milica, a career counsellor and youth worker, empowers young people, especially those facing vulnerabilities, through personalized mentoring, structured career guidance, and competency assessment, helping them build confidence and sustainable futures.

Marko (MA in Philology) career counsellor, specialized in SKA analysis, job profiling, and training design, supports youth and job seekers with practical and digital tools, and organizes career fairs and career workshops in schools. Together, they combine academic expertise, hands-on practice, and innovative approaches in the CGC field, supporting young people to make informed career choices.

SLOVENIA

“Digital Support with the Human Touch”: Digital Transformation with a Human-Centred Approach

Sandra Stare, Employment Service of Slovenia

Aim and Content of the Workshop

The workshop “Digital Support with the Human Touch” was implemented within the project “Development of a new service model of the Employment Service of Slovenia through strengthening digital operations.” The project is implemented within the framework of the European Cohesion Policy Programme for the period 2021–2027 in Slovenia, under Policy Objective 4, “A more social and inclusive Europe for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights,” Priority 6, “Knowledge, skills, and a responsive labour market,” and Specific Objective ESO4.2, “Updating institutions and

labour market services to assess and anticipate skills needs and to provide timely and tailored assistance and support in matching labour supply and demand, as well as in transitions and mobility” (ESF+). The project will run until 31 March 2029 and is co-financed by the European Social Fund Plus.

The main purpose of the workshop was to encourage reflection on the evolving role of employment counsellors in the context of digital transformation, where digital tools and artificial intelligence are increasingly shaping the delivery of lifelong career guidance services.



This development raises important questions regarding the roles and responsibilities within the counselling process, as well as the importance of maintaining professional judgement, ethical responsibility, and a high-quality counsellor–user relationship.

The workshop also presented key activities related to the development of the new service model of the Employment Service of Slovenia, with a particular focus on the use of digital tools to support counselling processes and improve the accessibility and efficiency of services.

Methodologically, the workshop was based on the Metaplan method, which enables structured discussion and joint formulation of conclusions. Participants worked in small groups to discuss key topics and developed shared findings covering digital transformation, the evolving role of counsellors, user needs, and the importance of trust and professional judgement in counselling processes.

The workshop brought together career counsellors, policy makers, and lifelong career guidance experts from various European countries.

Key Outcomes and Insights

Discussions highlighted that digital solutions significantly contribute to improved accessibility of services by enabling faster access to information, supporting communication processes, and increasing users' autonomy in exploring career opportunities. However, digital tools cannot address all individual needs, particularly in complex and vulnerable career situations.

Participants emphasised that digitalisation does not reduce the importance of counselling work; rather, it reinforces the need to integrate professional and digital competences. Key areas for further development of digital competences include data protection, cybersecurity, and critical evaluation of information.

Accessibility of services and the risk of digital exclusion were identified as important issues. Key factors contributing to exclusion include differences in digital skills, stereotypes, and limited access to digital services. To mitigate these risks, it is essential to adapt services to diverse user groups, utilise assistive technologies, provide flexible communication channels, and apply an inclusive service design approach.

The discussions also highlighted the issue of low awareness of digital services and insufficient understanding of their functionalities among users. Improving uptake requires clear communication, presentation of benefits, and simple, user-friendly instructions.

Main Conclusions

The workshop resulted in several key conclusions. One of the central findings is the importance of ensuring accessible and user-tailored digital services, as disparities in digital skills, access, and stereotypes may increase the risk of exclusion for certain user groups.

The discussions confirmed that digital solutions significantly enhance the accessibility and flexibility of services, enabling users to access information more quickly, communicate more efficiently, and gain greater autonomy in exploring career opportunities. However, the counsellor's role remains essential in providing professional judgement, support, and trust, particularly in complex career transitions, important decision-making processes, and vulnerable life situations.

A key conclusion of the workshop is that digital tools represent an important support to the counselling process, while the human element remains at its core.

Participants also emphasised the importance of systematic development of counsellors' digital competences and continuous professional



development, particularly in the areas of data protection, cybersecurity, and critical evaluation of information.

Finally, the workshop highlighted the challenge of limited awareness of digital services among users. To improve their effective use, it is essential to increase visibility, clearly communicate their functionalities and benefits, and ensure user-friendly guidance for their application.

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About the Expert

Sandra Stare is a professional in employee training and development with several years of experience strengthening the competencies of employment counsellors. She delivers professional training and serves as a "Train the Trainers" facilitator and internal coach. She has extensive experience working with vulnerable young people who were not attending school, focusing on preventing dropout from the education system. Her work emphasizes engaging youth in digital environments and developing strategies that help them view the transition to the labour market as meaningful and valuable.

Sandra has contributed to the implementation of a digital service for employees-e-trainings-designed to enhance professional and digital competencies. She currently leads counselor training within the project "Development and Implementation of a New Model of the Employment Service of Slovenia with Strengthening of Digital Operations – New Service Model," with a focus on strengthening counsellors' professional roles and enabling effective digital communication with users.



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