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European Network to Support
Guidance and Counselling

Euroguidance Insight

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Swedish reports about dropping out and how to prevent it

The Swedish Theme Group Youth gathers and disseminates knowledge and experiences from labour market projects directed at young people, using funds from the European Social Fund. It is a cooperation project between several Swedish authorities and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions.

In their report '10 Reasons for Dropping Out', young people who have not completed their upper secondary school education have shared their experiences. It turns out that bullying and lack of support are the foremost reasons.

There are of course also many reasons why the issue of completing upper secondary education has a high priority. These include the individual's opportunities to obtain work and further education, the labour market's skills requirements, the country's competitiveness and the individual's ability to contribute to society.

Check out the report '10 Reasons for Dropping Out':

[http://
eng.temaunga.se/
node/236](http://eng.temaunga.se/node/236)

In the report 'Preventing Early School Leaving', the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions looks into what municipalities and schools can do to make all students both want and manage to complete their education.

'Preventing Early
School Leaving':

[http://webbutik.skl.se/
sv/artiklar/preventing-
early-school-
leaving.html](http://webbutik.skl.se/sv/artiklar/preventing-early-school-leaving.html)

Good access to qualified educational and vocational guidance is pointed out as an important factor in both reports, but there are also many other areas, where efforts possibly could have made the difference.

Both reports can be downloaded and more information about the Theme Group Youth can be found here: <http://eng.temaunga.se/>

Nina Ahlroos

Euroguidance Sweden



Guidance counselling seminar for Croatian primary school counsellors and teachers

For the second consecutive year, Euroguidance Croatia organised a seminar for primary school staff – teachers and school counsellors. This endeavour was primarily driven by the desire to encourage guidance counselling for pupils from the earliest age.

**“Working closely
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Career guidance activities in Croatian schools are primarily performed by school counsellors - pedagogues and psychologists. Their role is to analyse individual (educational) needs of pupils, assess their abilities and motivation, present them with further education opportunities, and monitor their development and progress and, at the same time, encompassing the needs of the world of work. All in all – by no means an easy task!

To help them tackle the challenges of guidance and improve their counselling skills, Euroguidance Croatia has started organising two-day seminars for primary school counsellors. The seminar, conducted by experienced guidance experts - educational and



occupational psychologists¹ - aims at deepening school counsellors' knowledge which is essential for providing pupils with career guidance services. Upon completing the seminar, the participants are expected to achieve learning outcomes such as:

- understanding the school counsellor's role of in the process of guidance
- upgrading their understanding of the career decision making process and career development path
- applying assessment techniques for enhancing pupils' individual capacities for decision making
- enhancing cooperation skills with teachers, parents and community stakeholders in order to support pupils' career development.

... to name but a few.

Apart from school counsellors who are directly involved in the guidance process, teachers also play their part in defining their pupils² career paths. Working closely with pupils often enables teachers to get to know them better than the school counsellors, whose work per se does not imply daily contact with students.

Also, through assigning homework and in-class assignments, teachers play a vital role in developing their work habits. This is precisely why the Euroguidance seminar is trying to equip teachers with techniques tailored for assessing individual abilities, work motivation and occupational interests of their pupils.

Over two days of plenary lectures and interactive small-group workshops teachers discussed learning and behavioural issues of pupils that may interfere with school success and future career. They learned how to introduce the topics related to the development of educational/vocational interests in classrooms. This ranges from history classes, where pupils can discuss how certain occupations have changed over the past, over biology classes where learning about the human anatomy could easily set ground for learning about specialists in medicine, linking body parts to the medical field (e.g. heart – cardiology), to Croatian and foreign language classes where writing their first CVs and motivational letters encourages pupils to reflect on their own individual strengths. Also, by encouraging teachers' collaboration with other school staff members, parents and local career



¹ Trainers: Darja Maslić Seršić, Ph.D., Professor of W/O Psychology, Department of Psychology, University of Zagreb; Vlasta Vizek Vidović, Ph.D, Professor of Educational Psychology, Institute for Social Research, Zagreb.

² An elementary school teacher is assigned between 90 and 270 minutes of classroom work with the same group of students per week.

centres, the seminar puts the topic into a wider perspective.

“I applied for this seminar because I wanted to acquire new methods I can directly implement in my everyday work with pupils. This is exactly what the seminar has given me: very specific examples of how to help pupils choose their further education (and one day – their occupation),” claims Mirna Dejanović, one of the participants of the seminar and an English language teacher from the elementary school “Mate Lovrak” in Petrinja.

As the previous seminars on guidance counselling have so far proven to be quite successful, Euroguidance Croatia is planning on organising seminars for further generations of teachers and counsellors in the years to come. After all, teaching young people how to make career decisions and achieve lifelong employability is indeed a task that needs all the support it can get.



Doris Monjac
Euroguidance Croatia

Imbalanced mobility among students in Europe

The number of internationally mobile students worldwide continues to grow rapidly and is likely to approach five million this year. At the same time, there are a lot of differences and imbalances between countries in terms of the number of incoming and outgoing students. This conclusion is drawn in a report prepared for the Austrian Ministry for Science and Research.



The report shows that nearly half of all students mobile globally are studying in a European country, while a quarter are studying in America. One in five are choosing a host country in Asia or Oceania, while only 2% are studying in an African country. There is also an imbalance within continents as to how many are leaving and how many are coming. For example European countries are hosting 46% of all mobile students, while European students represent only 24% of all outgoing students. Europe therefore receives almost twice as many students as it sends off.

Large differences within Europe

There are considerable differences within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), with some countries receiving many

more students they send out. These include, for example, the UK, France, Spain and Denmark. Also Sweden is considered as a net importer but with more balanced levels.

Countries located in the southeastern and northeastern parts of Europe have more outgoing than incoming students, making them net exporters. Smaller countries such as Malta, Iceland and Ireland are also net exporters.

Why the imbalance?

The reasons for the unbalanced flow of internationally mobile students in Europe are several. A country's relative GDP turns out to be very important for student mobility. Students from countries with lower GDP (for example, in the South and East) tend to study more often in countries with higher GDP (for example, countries in the north and west) than vice versa. In addition, language plays an important part, with highly unbalanced incoming mobility flows to countries with English as the official language.

“Financial issues are the main obstacle for European students.”

Economy the biggest obstacle

When looking closer at the personal barriers to international mobility, financial issues are the main obstacle for European students. The economy tends to be more significant for students from lower social groups. These are also more often choosing a short stay and practical training rather than studies. The differences in social background are of bigger importance for young students who are more dependent on family and state aid. The effect of social background is weaker among the elderly (30 +) students. Their personal circumstances (family / partner / children) are a major obstacle. In northern European countries, students often stated personal reasons as barriers to study abroad, while financial and structural barriers had less significance.

Overall, one can see that it is mainly students with a low educational background, students with late transition to higher education and students with disabilities who are the most under-represented in the group of internationally mobile students in Europe.



Read more in
the report
'Student Mobility
in the
EHEA' (pdf):

[http://www.equi.at/
dateien/
Student_mobility_i
n_EHEA.pdf](http://www.equi.at/dateien/Student_mobility_in_EHEA.pdf)

Nina Ahlroos
Euroguidance Sweden

Studying abroad improves job opportunities

New Research from the European Commission on Erasmus

After completing higher education, it is easier to attain a job having studied or completed a work placement abroad. Young European people with higher education degrees perform better in the labour market if international experience is on their CVs. This is the conclusion of an extensive study, which has examined the benefits of the Erasmus exchange programme, conducted by the European Commission.

Five years after completing higher education, the unemployment rate is 23 percent lower for former students who have gone on an Erasmus exchange programme, compared to those who did not go abroad in connection to their education. In addition, the likelihood of experiencing long-term unemployment is halved for former exchange students, when compared to those who have not travelled internationally during their studies.

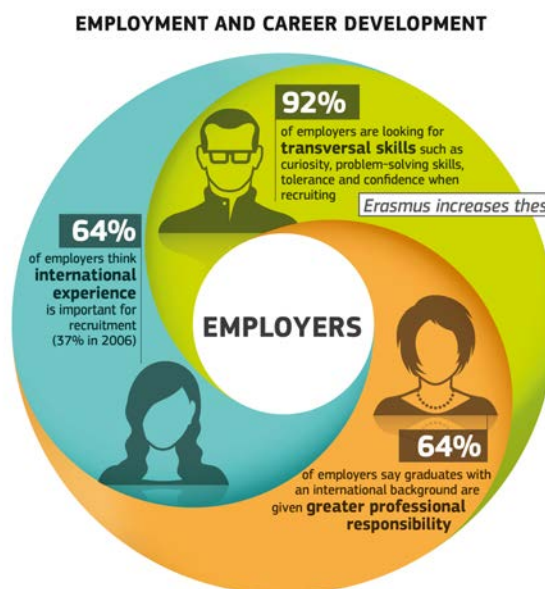
Students who study abroad or complete a work placement abroad gain international experience and possess, to a greater extent, qualities such as openness, tolerance, curiosity and the ability to solve problems, the study shows. These attributes are pointed at as important competencies by more than 92 percent of those employers who were asked what they look for when hiring new members of staff.

Moreover, the study shows that more than one in three of those who have completed a work placement with the Erasmus programme are offered a position in the host company. Also, one in ten of all previous Erasmus interns start their own business.

Read more about the findings of the Commissions' Erasmus Impact Study:

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-1025_en.htm

Denise Rose Hansen and BIRTHA THEUT
Euroguidance Denmark



Effects of an Erasmus stay abroad:

- the Erasmus Impact Study is the most extensive study of its kind and focuses on the significance which Erasmus stays abroad have for European students
- the survey combines both qualitative and quantitative interviews with almost 80,000 respondents from 34 countries – including students and companies
- tests conducted before and after students have completed their exchange abroad shows that Erasmus students score higher in attributes such as tolerance, problem solving skills, curiosity and awareness of own strengths and weaknesses, even prior to the start of the exchange programme. When students return, the difference between an Erasmus student and other students has increased further regarding these qualities.
- the survey was conducted by the European Commission by an independent consortium consisting of CHE Consult, Brussels Education Service, Compostela Group of Universities and Erasmus Student Network.

Professionalising Career Education and Guidance in various forms and sizes

Imagine being a career teacher at a secondary school, who's always searching for ways to improve career education and guidance (CEG). You discuss the current CEG situation with the management team. You are then asked to produce a proposal to improve CEG at the school. Part of this involves professionalising CEG. You like the sound of this, but how do you do it and where do you start?

In a project aimed at improving career guidance in schools, the Dutch Council for Secondary Education (VO-Raad) identified and published practical starting points and developed a website (www.vo-lob.nl – only in Dutch) to help in this process.

One instrument that was developed is the CEG scan, which offers the opportunity to deliver a picture of the current situation in your school or department. In a follow-up process with the school management and a team, you decide on your school's desired CEG situation. It is important that the desired situation fits with your school's ideas about education and organisation. The way in which the school is organised, for example, has direct implications for possible and desired changes; and, after all, educational vision and design also affect the competences that are demanded from different parties involved in CEG.



The publication Professionalising Career Education and Guidance (CEG) in various forms and sizes offers the opportunity to learn about the CEG scan and about developing a career education and guidance strategy based on the current situation and the desired situation in your school and department.

“It is important that the desired situation fits with your school's ideas about education and organisation.”

The publication can be downloaded via:

<http://www.euroguidance.nl/>

[2_3052_Professionalising_Career_Education_and_Guidance_%28CEG_%29_in_various_forms_and_sizes.aspx](http://www.euroguidance.nl/2_3052_Professionalising_Career_Education_and_Guidance_%28CEG_%29_in_various_forms_and_sizes.aspx)

Peter van Deursen
Euroguidance the Netherlands

Future career guidance skills under the microscope in Canterbury

The NICE Network (The Network for Innovation in Career Guidance and Counselling in Europe) arranged a conference at Canterbury Christ Church University in England in September focused on the future of career guidance education and career guidance competencies.

The network wanted to get feedback on some of the proposals that have been developed within their cooperation project:

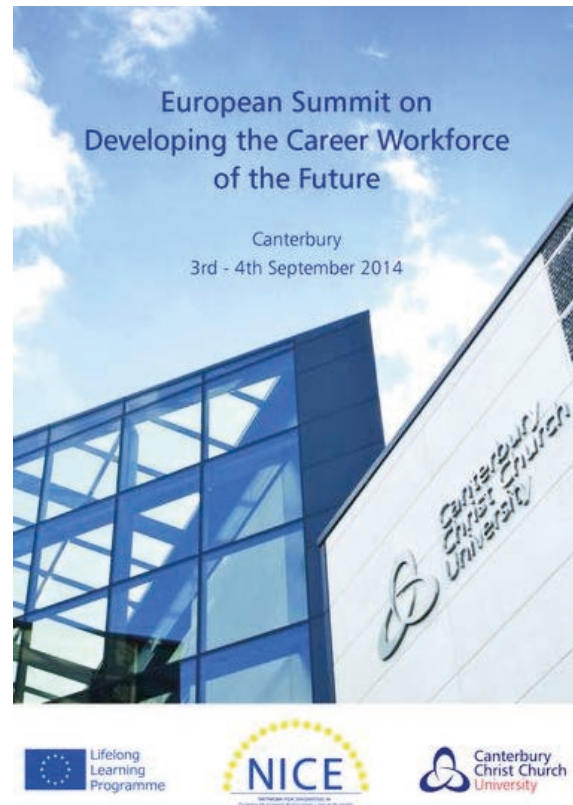
- The key needs for the future career guidance education which have been summarized in a Memorandum;
- A European standard for competence was proposed in order to professionalize guidance and counselling;
- A Common Agenda for Research has been established to develop research cooperation in the area.

The proposals were discussed for two days by the 200 members from 30 countries that participated. Questions such as "do career guidance practitioners today really learn what they need to know?", "what are the roles and functions of career guidance in the society and what skills are needed to cope with these?" and "what kind of research is needed to innovate the field of career guidance and counselling?" were scrutinized.

To validate the competence standards, NICE asks all interested career professionals, associations, public employment service managers, HR managers, citizen representatives, researchers, lecturers, and policy-makers concerned with questions of education, training, employment, inclusion and lifelong guidance to review them and provide feedback and comments before November 15, 2014. The feedback will be collected and summarized by Johannes Katsarov (johannes_katsarov@hotmail.de), coordinator of the NICE network, and will be considered in the revision and publication of the first edition of the competence standards by the responsible team of researchers in 2015.

Anyone who wants to take a closer look at the various proposals and their content can download the NICE Network PDF European Summit on Developing the Career Workforce of the Future: <http://www.nice-network.eu/363.html>

Nina Ahlroos
Euroguidance Sweden



NICE is a network funded by the European Commission and consists of higher education institutions in Europe offering career guidance education.

Lunch in the darkness

Euroguidance study visit in Slovenia

Counsellors from the Czech Republic, Poland and Malta went on a two day study visit to Slovenia at the end of September. The focus of the visit was guidance and assistance to children and young people with special needs and the guests visited several Slovenian institutions.

The first day was dedicated to presentations and discussions on work of the Career Centre of the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS), the Slovenian situation on the labour market, career counselling in education and ESS tools and workshops developed at the ESS for career planning. Career counsellors from Regional Career Centre and ESS Central and Regional Office had interesting presentations and discussions with the guests. In the evening, participants dined in the old part of Ljubljana where waiters with Down syndrome are among the employed.

On the second day participants visited the school for blind and visually impaired young people in Ljubljana. Here the director of the school and teachers presented the school's work with children with disabilities who can avail of adapted educational approaches, tools and working methods specially adapted for the blind or visual impaired. Some of the students have completed university degrees or are well known artists or journalists. But for the majority of them, getting a job is still a real challenge, because adapted workplaces are still quite rare.

“Getting a job is still a real challenge, because adapted workplaces are still quite rare.”

The group then visited a nearby sensory garden with equipment for blind and visually impaired young people where they can test different skills like moving around different obstacles. The counsellors covered their eyes and in that way experienced how difficult it is to do something if you cannot see. After this interesting exercise where they got to employ all other senses to get some orientation in a space, the group returned back to the school to meet with young children with visual impairments

Another challenge lay ahead, the counsellors had to cover their eyes again and each one followed a young person (with their left hand on their shoulder) down to the basement kitchen



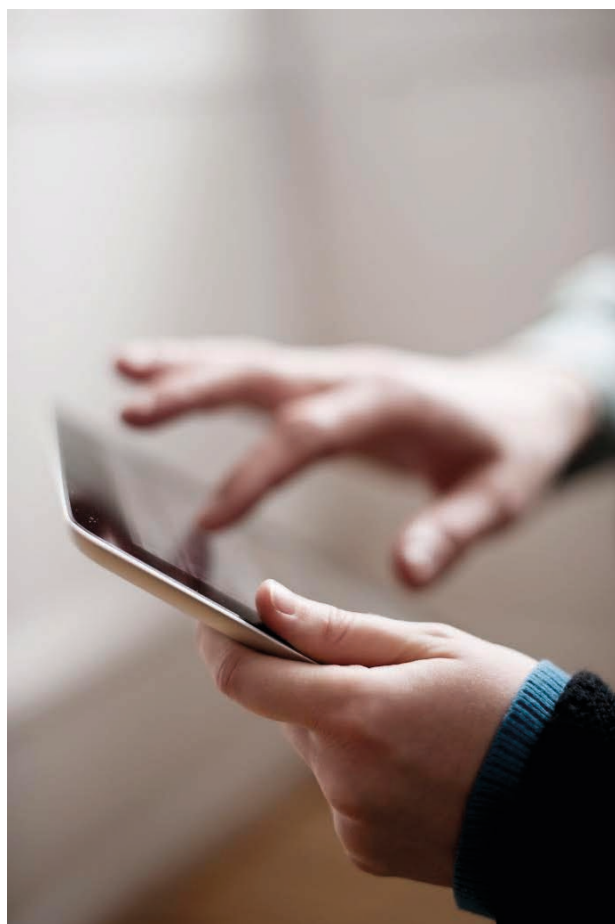
Euroguidance study visit participants in Ljubljana who had the opportunity to experience the life of a person with visual impairments and to find out how to manage the obstacles they face in everyday life.

where lunch was served in complete darkness. A young leader with a visual impairment told each participant where to find the jug with water, the plate and the cutlery. Thus, they learned new skills! Some were quite quick at adapting to new circumstances while a few others found this much more difficult. After eating, still in the dark, some of the participants started to sing and everyone noticed the rhythm of the songs even more than they would

usually do. They heard the colours of the voices and the darkness was an open space for the counsellor's unusually silent conversations on different topics.

The last stop was made at school in Ljubljana which is known for its different vocational programmes on lower educational level. The director and a teacher of the school presented their school and the vocational programmes which are on offer. The guests took a short tour across the school and meanwhile the school guide talked about their plans to launch a new higher vocational programme in 2015. At the end of the study visit, all participants said that they would bring with them the unique experiences which increased their understanding and made them feel more connected to young people who are blind or visually impaired.

Marko Zupančič
Euroguidance Slovenia



What is an e-portfolio? Two Polish experts give their opinion

Euroguidance: Most of us have heard about artistic portfolio but what is e-portfolio?

Agnieszka Chrzęszcz: Indeed the method is based on a well-established practice of presenting the results of one's work for a wider audience. It is frequently used by the artists, photographers or architects to document their achievements and it can be effectively used in other professional or educational settings. So e-portfolio is a digital and online collection of evidence that presents a personal story of professional development and learning.

Euroguidance: So in fact it seems like an online CV or a resume, doesn't it?

Agnieszka Chrzęszcz: In a CV one can declare certain competences or skills. They can be described but there is no evidence available to prove them. The process of developing e-portfolio requires the author to link declared

qualities, skills, attitudes or competences to real examples.

Karolina Grodecka: Take for example such a competence as „online communication“ that is an important asset for employees nowadays. Instead of describing your abilities and tools you can operate, a few screenshots of your daily communication activities can be the evidence your skills. The audience – be it an assessor, an employer, a teacher – can evaluate your competence.

Euroguidance: Well, if your skills in editing digital images are high you can fake the online evidence even more easily.

Karolina Grodecka: That is true. However e-portfolio belongs to the author so cheating yourself is rather counterproductive...

Agnieszka Chrzęszcz: ... and will backfire on the author very shortly in real-time situation. Also the evidence is set in a broader perspective and usually is linked to the reflective commentaries. An e-portfolio tells a story about its author so the coherence between the evidence and structure is also important.

Euroguidance: It sounds like a powerful tool. Where it can be used?

Karolina Grodecka: The method is very flexible. Collecting, selecting and presenting evidence for one's work, learning and development can be used effectively with kids and adults, from the kindergarden, continued at any education level and for professional purposes as well. It has numerous effects on the learner: it increases one's self-esteem, helps with direct learning and enhances digital competences.



Agnieszka Chrzęszcz: Collecting and selecting pieces of work makes one stop and reflect on the recent developments and learning. Such a realisation is especially important in a current fast-running society.

“Career advisors can use it with their clients to stimulate reflection.”

Karolina Grodecka: e-Portfolio is very often a result of online courses, where the learners produce their work digitally anyway. Such a purposeful collection can be used for assessment purposes or can be developed along the course to support reflection and deepen learning experience.

Euroguidance: What about adults? Can e-portfolio come in handy with professional development?

Agnieszka Chrzęszcz: In fact mapping competences and skills and presenting them in a digital, online form is a complex mental activity. The process of e-portfolio development can correspond to the coaching as it helps to demonstrate and articulate individual abilities. Career advisors can use it with their clients to stimulate reflection, support the choices and suggest more individualised development strategies.

Euroguidance: Surely it is not a method for everyone. Computer skills are not so widespread, and access to Internet also can be difficult to many people.

Karolina Grodecka: Well, an e-portfolio is conceived in one's head. It is not based on a complicated technology which makes e-portfolio a great learning strategy. On the contrary, simple online services, such as blogs are sufficient to start e-portfolio journey. Besides, producing digital artifact, such as documents or photos, has never been easier. Libraries, ICT centres, schools or regional labour offices have usually excellent equipment and staff willing to help.

Agnieszka Chrzęszcz: Also there are numerous resources, in a variety of languages, that can help trainers and learners, experts and practitioners with e-portfolio methods. One of them is

online *Europortfolio.eu* community where guidelines, webinars, articles and case studies along with real people are available to everyone. It takes time to discover the full potential of e-portfolio but it is worth trying it out.

Agnieszka Chrzęszcz is an e-portfolio practitioner and expert, the author of numerous publications, a trainer and online facilitator. She works at Centre of e-Learning of AGH University of Science and Technology where she designs and evaluates online courses, supports academic staff and teachers and manages educational project.

Karolina Grodecka majored in Information Science and Librarianship at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow (2007). Since 2005 she has been employed at the Centre of e-Learning of AGH University of Science and Technology. She took part in international projects, designs and facilitates e-learning courses and e-portfolio. Her recent field of professional interests is Open Education Resources. She took part of creation and development of Open AGH repository of e-textbooks at University.

Karolina Szczuka
Euroguidance Poland