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MOBILITY GUIDANCE

Handbook for guidance
practitioners

2026



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Foreword

In today's interconnected world, international experience is crucial for career development, and the freedom of movement within the EU has significantly expanded these opportunities. This handbook is designed to equip guidance practitioners, career counsellors, school counsellors, and other professionals with the knowledge and tools needed to effectively support clients considering mobility for education, training, or employment.

The **Euroguidance Network** is a collaboration of national resource and information centres for guidance across European countries. The main target group of Euroguidance is guidance practitioners and policy makers from both the educational and employment sectors in EU and EEA member states and in candidate countries.

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 Euroguidance activities and the concrete tasks of the Euroguidance centres vary in different countries. Common activities include promoting the European dimension in guidance and providing quality information on lifelong guidance and mobility for learning purposes.

Euroguidance centres support 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. 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 as well as project results, innovative working methods, and good practice in the field of lifelong guidance.

The Euroguidance network has addressed the skills development of guidance practitioners in mobility for many years. This has been achieved through various initiatives, including publishing relevant materials, contributing to numerous events, organising mobility training opportunities, and developing comprehensive training resources.

Throughout this handbook, you will find:

Theoretical background:

Insights into the theoretical models and concepts that underpin mobility guidance.

Practical steps:

Detailed guidance on supporting clients before, during, and after their mobility experiences.

Tools and resources:

A wealth of resources, including self-assessment instruments, coping strategies, and intercultural sensitivity frameworks.

Lifelong guidance supports the career development of individuals of all ages at all stages of their careers. The EU has introduced several initiatives to support guidance practitioners in promoting lifelong learning, skills development, and mobility. These milestones help individuals navigate their careers and personal development in an interconnected world.

The **Council Resolution on Strengthening Policies, Systems, and Practices in Guidance Throughout Life in Europe** (2004) emphasised the role of guidance in achieving EU goals such as economic development and labour market efficiency. It highlighted the importance of guidance in promoting social and economic integration by supporting access to education, training, and work opportunities.

The **Council Resolution on Better Integrating Lifelong Guidance into Lifelong Learning Strategies** (2008) strengthened the role of guidance in lifelong learning strategies and emphasised cross-sectoral cooperation. Around the same time, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) was introduced, providing a common reference framework for qualifications systems and levels across Europe. The EQF facilitates workers' mobility and supports guidance practitioners in integrating lifelong learning into education and employment policies.

We invite you to explore this handbook and discover the valuable resources and insights it offers to enhance your mobility guidance practice.

In today's globalised world, international experience is crucial for career development. The freedom of movement within the EU has increased the potential for mobility in education, training, and employment. This makes it a relevant aspect for guiding students, employees, job seekers, and employers across geographical borders.

1.1 Understanding mobility

Mobility can be defined by its process (e.g., physical or virtual mobility, within one country or cross-border), reasons (e.g., tourism, migration), or purpose (e.g., working, learning). Mobility for education, training, and employment involves a period of education, work placement, language course, work, or volunteering in another country, with the intention of returning home. This can be individually organised or supported by an institution. In both cases, seeking mobility guidance beforehand and having a support system during and after the mobility is recommended.

Labour mobility involves changing the location of workers, either between countries (geographical mobility) or between different jobs (occupational mobility). A significant achievement within the EU is the free movement of labour, allowing citizens to work in other EU or EEA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) with the same rights and social security benefits as national citizens, without needing a work permit. The EU aims to improve fair labour mobility in Europe and to remove barriers that limit this mobility. The EU promotes mobility by helping job seekers and employers find each other and seeks to prevent abuses of mobile workers while coordinating efforts against undeclared work.

Labour mobility is often initiated by individuals seeking better job opportunities, higher wages, or improved living conditions, and they look for opportunities based on their personal preferences. In addition to individual efforts, government programmes and private recruitment agencies also play a role in attracting skilled workers and supporting the process of labour mobility.

Learning mobility, as defined in the Green Paper "Promoting the learning mobility of young people", involves transnational mobility for acquiring new skills that enhance employability and personal development. It has a clear educational purpose, such as study, training or non-formal and informal learning. Non-formal and informal learning encompasses various activities over short (several weeks or months) or longer (one or more years) periods, including volunteer services, youth exchanges, work camps, school exchanges, language courses, and placements in enterprises. The Council Recommendation "Europe on the Move - learning mobility opportunities for everyone" (2024) explicitly includes virtual components as part of learning mobility.

Learning mobility can either be structured or self-organised. In the case of **self-organised mobility**, individuals take the initiative and organise their own learning experiences, offering greater flexibility, but also requiring more personal effort and responsibility. In contrast, **structured mobility** involves participating in established programmes (e.g. Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps, etc.) or frameworks that facilitate movement between institutions (e.g. agreements between universities), providing a clear pathway and support system. Public programmes often provide partial or full funding. The application process varies by programme: some require direct application (e.g. scholarship or volunteering programmes), while others, such as Erasmus+ for students, require applying through an institution (e.g. school, university, etc.), which then selects and nominates candidates.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted education, training, and workplace learning, accelerating the development of new mobility patterns for learning purposes, such as **blended and virtual mobility** exchanges. Virtual mobility refers to activities, experiences, or services typically requiring physical presence that are accomplished through digital means. This has been particularly established in higher education, allowing students to participate in courses, seminars, or internships offered by institutions in different countries or regions without the need for physical travel.

The Erasmus+ programme has integrated virtual mobility into its framework, enabling students and staff in higher education to engage in virtual exchange programmes, online collaboration, and blended mobility. ECTS credit points acquired through virtual mobility are recognised across different educational institutions in Europe.

In professional settings, virtual mobility leverages digital technologies to transcend geographical barriers, providing greater flexibility and accessibility in education, work, and other activities. This provides greater flexibility and accessibility in education, work, and other activities.

The European Union has established a framework of regulations, initiatives, and policies that support and promote remote work, particularly in education and the workplace. Virtual mobility in the workplace is often governed by national regulations and collective agreements that address teleworking. The European Framework Agreement on Telework (2002, updated in 2023) provides guidelines for teleworking arrangements across EU member states.

1.2 Benefits of mobility

Mobility, whether for learning or work purposes, offers significant benefits at both individual and societal levels. Being exposed to new challenges, environments, and perspectives impacts personal and professional development. This experience fosters independence, self-confidence, and adaptability, while enhancing problem-solving skills, cultural awareness, and language proficiency. Engaging with different teaching methods, curricula, and work environments stimulates new ways of thinking and broadens academic and professional horizons.

A study by the [Romanian Institute for Educational Sciences](#) (ANPCDEFP, 2019) on the positive impact of Erasmus+ projects on students at risk of school dropout shows that mobility increases motivation for learning and class engagement, improves subject-related skills, and enhances techniques for efficient learning. Additionally, students developed stronger social and teamwork skills, experienced greater intercultural cooperation, and showed higher self-esteem.

At societal level, mobility plays a crucial role in improving employability, developing transversal skills, and addressing labour market needs. The Euroguidance publication "[Open the Door to the World](#)" (2017) emphasises the importance of having an extended understanding of international experience, as many required key employability skills are developed through learning or working mobility. Traditionally, international experience is understood as having lived or studied abroad, improving language skills, expanding professional networks, understanding global markets, or working with diverse teams. However, a broader perspective acknowledges that its benefits extend far beyond cultural exposure or language acquisition. It encompasses the ability to develop a global mindset, build networks beyond one's own field, and collaborate with diverse groups. Additionally, it fosters personal and professional growth.

As soft skills become just as crucial as technical expertise in today's globalised labour market, mobility plays a key role in developing essential competencies, including:

- **Cultural skills:** enhances *intercultural communication*, *cultural sensitivity*, and *tolerance*, essential for navigating global workplaces.
- **Language skills:** Mobility often boosts *multilingual proficiency*, aiding in *translation and interpretation* abilities.
- **Adaptability and flexibility:** The ability to adjust to new environments fosters *resilience* and *problem-solving* skills, which are key in dynamic job markets.
- **Global awareness:** Understanding international issues - political, economic, and social - develops *open-mindedness* and broader perspectives on global relations.
- **Professional and technical skills:** Mobility can expose individuals to the latest *industry-specific advancements* and *technological innovations*, often unavailable in their home countries. Engaging furthermore with different teaching methods, curricula, and work environments can stimulate new ways of thinking and broaden academic and professional perspectives.
- **Networking and collaboration:** Mobility also enables the creation of *diverse professional networks*, which can provide valuable career opportunities and long-term professional growth.

In 2023, 74% of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Europe reported difficulties in finding skilled workers for at least one job position ([Flash Eurobarometer 529](#)). This shortage affects critical industries and hampers economic growth. Mobility can help address these gaps by equipping individuals with in-demand skills and providing access to internationally recognised certifications, degrees, or professional qualifications. This, in turn, enhances their global competitiveness and improves labour market efficiency.

Employers highly value mobility experience, as it demonstrates the ability to adapt, work in diverse settings, and manage complex situations. Beyond enhancing individual career prospects and higher earning potential, mobility fosters knowledge exchange, bringing fresh skills and innovations to host communities. It also strengthens social cohesion by encouraging cross-cultural interactions, tolerance, and mutual understanding, contributing to local and global development.

The **European Commission's Erasmus Impact Study** (Brandenburg *et al*, 2014) compared students who participated in mobility activities with those who did not and found that mobile students - particularly those in Erasmus programs - demonstrated higher employability skills, even after accounting for socio-economic factors and prior intercultural experience. While all mobility participants had stronger employability skills than non-participants, 52% of Erasmus students and 51% of participants in other programs reported further improvement.

Further findings from the **Erasmus Impact Study** show that mobility participants secure jobs faster than their non-mobile peers. Among Erasmus+ graduates, 79% found employment within three months of graduation, compared to 75% of non-mobile graduates. Additionally, they reported higher job satisfaction, greater access to international career opportunities, and improved job characteristics, such as security and career prospects. Notably, 40% of Erasmus+ trainees were offered jobs at their host companies, highlighting the program's role in labour market integration. However, the study also acknowledged that mobility participants already tend to have strong employability factors before participating in such programs, which should be considered when interpreting the findings.

The positive impact of mobility on personal development is widely recognised. Even short-term exchanges of less than four weeks can lead to significant improvements in personal growth. The **European Commission's Erasmus+ Annual Report (2022)** found that 98% of mobility participants considered their experience beneficial, with 78% reporting improved foreign language skills and 85% developing key skills. Furthermore, 81% believed mobility enhanced their career opportunities, 72% gained a clearer vision of their future career path, and 83% improved skills relevant to their current work or studies. Additionally, 81% received academic recognition for their mobility experience.

Therefore, mobility is a powerful tool for enhancing employability, fostering adaptability, and developing global competencies. The evidence overwhelmingly supports its positive impact on career prospects, soft skill development, and labour market integration. While challenges such as financial constraints and accessibility remain, informed guidance from career counsellors can help individuals overcome these barriers and fully benefit from international experiences. As the global labour market evolves, mobility remains a key driver of personal and professional growth.

1.3 Current developments

Current developments in labour mobility are characterised by changing dynamics, such as skills shortages, labour demand, post-pandemic recovery, digital transformation, and policy improvements. After years of decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic, labour mobility patterns have rebounded to pre-pandemic levels, particularly in cross-border commuting and postings. [The Intra-EU Labour Mobility Report](#) (European Commission, 2024) highlights that the labour market performance of mobile workers from the EU, with an employment rate of 77%, exceeds the employment rate of nationals (75%) and third-country nationals (62%).

The European Labour Authority (ELA), responsible for ensuring fair and effective labour mobility across the EU, recently published its Capacity Building Strategy for 2024-2030. This long-term strategy aims to provide flexible and comprehensive support through various initiatives, including enhancing knowledge-sharing, networking, and the use of digital tools to address challenges such as the enforcement of EU labour mobility laws and cross-border cooperation.

The 2024 Eurobarometer survey on Youth and Democracy revealed that 43% of respondents have participated in studying, training, or apprenticeships in another EU country, a slight increase from 39% in 2022. According to the 2023 Eurobarometer survey on the Integration of Young People into the Labour Market, 21% of young respondents had at least one of their traineeships in another EU country. The main barriers mentioned to accessing cross-border traineeships were lack of financial resources and information about these opportunities.

In November 2023, the European Commission adopted the proposal for a Council Recommendation **'Europe on the Move'** promoting learning mobility opportunities for everyone. This is a key building block of the European Education Area (EEA) to integrate learning mobility into all education and training pathways. The proposal includes three EU-level targets to be achieved by 2030:

- 25% of graduates in higher education should have a learning mobility experience, up from the present target of 20%.
- 15% of vocational learners in vocational education and training (VET) should benefit from learning mobility abroad, up from the previous target of 8% for 2025.
- 20% of all learners benefiting from learning mobility abroad - in all education, training, and youth and sport systems - should be people with fewer opportunities.

Since its inception in 1987, Erasmus+ has provided opportunities to more than 15 million participants. In 2022, about one million learners participated in an Erasmus+ learning mobility. The largest group consisted of over 320,000 students in higher education, followed by group mobility in schools (about 276,000) and VET (about 194,000). Erasmus+ programme has increasingly opened up to the socially advantaged sections of the population. [Erasmus+ Review 2014-2020 and outlook for 2021-2027](#) states that 38% of students on Erasmus+ mobility schemes come from a working-class social background, 60% of Erasmus+

vocational training students are young people from working-class social backgrounds, 39% of students benefiting from Erasmus+ mobility receive grants on social criteria, and 77% of projects involve students with learning difficulties.



Questions for reflection

- How do you currently explain the concept of mobility to your clients? Are there any aspects you might want to emphasise more based on this chapter?
- In what ways can you integrate the benefits of mobility into your career counselling sessions to motivate clients to pursue international opportunities?
- How can you advocate for mobility opportunities within your organisation or network to enhance support for clients interested in mobility?

Mobility and intercultural exchange have long been instruments for promoting international understanding and uniting people, with roots tracing back to post-second world war youth work initiatives. Over time, various institutions, schools, universities, NGOs, and peace movements have launched mobility initiatives worldwide.

However, mobility often presents challenges, with participants encountering difficulties adapting to foreign traditions, communication styles, and social relations.

To enhance mobility experiences for young people, it is crucial to understand and improve the mobility guidance process. This chapter explores key factors contributing to successful mobility experiences and delves into the role of guidance practitioners in facilitating these processes.

Mobility guidance encompasses assistance with geographical relocation, providing information and support in the context of lifelong career guidance (education, employment, retraining, etc.). It is neutral, confidential, client-centred, and takes into account the feedback of all those involved. In the mobility guidance process, transparent methodologies are used, covering diverse activities tailored to support relocation, such as advisory interviews, project support, remote guidance, promotion of personal mobility plans, and coordination of awareness sessions. Guidance practitioners operate in various institutions, including universities (international office), employment services, and youth information networks (Eurodesk).

In addition to general guidance counselling skills, such as communication skills, career and educational development knowledge, ethical and cultural competencies, problem solving, and adaptability, practitioners providing mobility guidance need specific additional skills and knowledge to address the unique challenges of international mobility. These include:

- **Cross-cultural skills:** Cultural awareness, intercultural communication, and understanding the professional benefits of international experiences.
- **Knowledge of global education and employment systems:** Familiarity with the educational and vocational training systems, qualification recognitions, grants, European and global mobility programs, internship and work placement opportunities.
- **Legal and financial knowledge:** Awareness of immigration laws, residency requirements, employment regulations, and living conditions in various countries.

Effective mobility guidance spans three stages: before, during, and after the stay abroad. Key questions to address at each stage include:

- 1. Pre-departure support:** How can we prepare individuals for learning or working mobility abroad?
- 2. Support during mobility:** How can we assist individuals if challenges arise?
- 3. Post-mobility follow up:** How can we facilitate learning to help participants value and integrate their experiences and develop future plans?

Pre-departure support

Mobility preparation is crucial for a successful mobility experience. During the orientation and preparation phase, guidance practitioners should help individuals:

- Clarify personal goals and motivations.
- Explore suitable mobility opportunities.
- Make informed decisions about duration, destination, funding, and program type.
- Address cross-cutting topics such as inclusion and sustainability.
- Set realistic expectations and begin developing intercultural sensitivity through intercultural training and practical information.

Effective guidance involves providing access to reliable information and helping participants consider key factors to make informed decisions.

Support during mobility

During the mobility phase, guidance focuses on supporting participants as they navigate their new environment, adapt to cultural differences, and manage any challenges that arise. Key aspects of mid-mobility support include:

- Helping participants address triggers positively, learn from crises, and deal with conflicts effectively.
- Encouraging intercultural learning, resilience, and self-efficacy.
- Being available for check-ins, troubleshooting, and addressing any challenges that arise.
- Ensuring participants know how to access support structures and emphasizing the importance of peer groups.

Monitoring and evaluation can detect problems early, promoting reflection and behaviour change. Modern communication tools can help participants stay connected with their support network back home and maintain links with family and friends.

Conflicts and crises can be seen as positive challenges and opportunities for growth if faced and not avoided. The support of significant others or peer groups is crucial in dealing with these challenges. It is

essential to recognise that practical problems may mask deeper issues such as homesickness or cultural shock.

In the following chapters, we will present self-assessment instruments and Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, which can be used in the evaluation process to map skills, growth, and intercultural learning during the mobility experience.

Post-mobility follow-up

In the post-mobility phase, the focus shifts to reflection, recognition, and reintegration. Guidance practitioners play a crucial role in helping participants:

- Reflect on their experiences.
- Articulate the skills and competencies gained.
- Connect these to future educational or career paths.
- Address potential reverse culture shock.
- Support the validation of learning outcomes (e.g., through certificates or learning agreements).

Upon return, participants should have opportunities to share their experiences, reflect on their learning, and consider the impact on their lifelong learning journey. An additional evaluation meeting can be scheduled a few months later, allowing participants to gain perspective and objectively assess their experiences. This follow-up meeting also provides a chance to share their stories again, at a time when there may be fewer opportunities and interested listeners.

Ideally, the partner abroad (school, university, company, NGO, etc.) should be involved in the follow-up process. Participants can provide valuable feedback to the host organisation(s) on their management and support. While this can be challenging due to costs and human resources, modern online meeting tools can facilitate the process.

Mobility participants' rich experiences can significantly contribute to peer learning for new participants. Sharing these experiences helps provide a more realistic view of going abroad and supports the continuous improvement of mobility guidance. This process is not linear but a continuous, circular effort involving all stakeholders.

2.1 Useful theories and models for guidance practitioners

Based on literature, research and guidance practitioners experiences, this section explores theoretical concepts that enhance a better understanding of mobility abroad.

The connection between mobility and career has been little studied. While students often receive support

for adapting to cultural, academic, and organizational challenges, they rarely receive guidance on integrating mobility into a conscious career plan (Puukari, 2012).

Fukuyama's **theory of rational choice of profession** can be applied to develop career guidance measures that promote across various contexts (Fukuyama in Olehnoviča, 2007). This theory emphasises a person's ability to choose a profession that aligns with their needs, interests, goals, and physical requirements. According to Fukuyama, individuals make rational choices based on self-assessment, knowledge of the profession and professional practice. By applying this theory, mobility guidance practitioners can help individuals make informed career decisions that integrate their mobility experiences, enhancing their long-term professional prospects.

Studies on student mobility choices show that without career guidance, students' choices are often emotionally driven (Doyle, et al, 2010 and Bartram, 2013). Without guidance, the deliberate career choice aspects described by Fukuyama – such as individual traits; knowledge of the profession, and practical experience – are often overlooked in the mobility planning process. This implies that mobility opportunities are not necessarily aligned with the individual's traits or study requirements.

The **Concentric-Circles approach** (Rohrlich, 1993) suggests that practical information linked to food, health, shelter, sleep, safety and hygiene (the inner circle) must be met first before addressing other needs. Only then, mobility guidance can focus on other aspects of mobility, such as defining individual/organisational learning goals, reflecting on coping skills, organizing intercultural learning activities, explaining cultural adaptation, and addressing coping skills and strategies. Guidance sessions can support guidance seekers to clarify their motivation and aims for the mobility experience.

The **Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) theory** (Bennett, 1993) offers a valuable framework for guidance practitioners to better prepare individuals for mobility. This grounded theory explains how people or groups experience and respond to cultural differences, and how a person can develop from an ethnocentric view (seeing one's own culture as central or superior) to an ethnorelative view (being open, adaptable, and effective in intercultural situations).

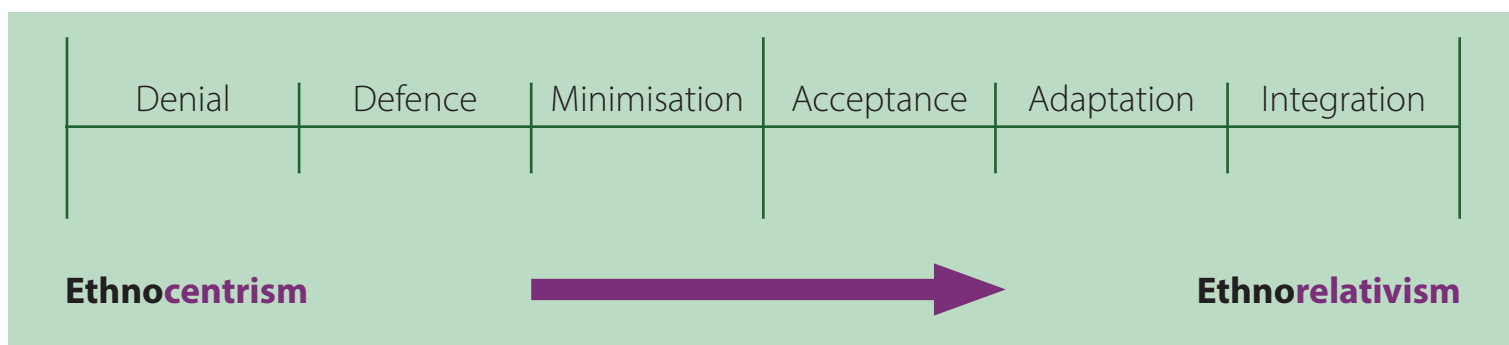
The DMIS theory includes six stages that help understand how people experience cultural differences (Sieck, 2021):

Ethnocentric stages (*Own culture is seen as central or "better" than others*):

1. **Denial:** Individuals do not recognise cultural differences around or only notice broad categories, often due to isolation or lack of exposure.
2. **Defence:** Cultural differences are acknowledged but viewed as threatening. One's own culture is seen as superior, leading to negative stereotyping or denigration of other cultures.
3. **Minimisation:** Cultural differences are downplayed with an emphasis on universal similarities. Individuals may believe deep down, everyone is essentially the same.

Ethnorelative stages (*Cultural differences are seen as real, normal, and valuable*):

- 4. Acceptance:** Individuals recognise and appreciate deep cultural differences in values and behaviours without judgement, showing curiosity and respect.
- 5. Adaptation:** Individuals develop the ability to shift perspectives and adapt their behaviour to different cultural contexts, enhancing effective intercultural communication.
- 6. Integration:** Cultural differences are fully integrated into one's identity. Individuals can move fluidly among cultures and see differences as positive aspects of life.



Guidance practitioners can use this framework to assess and support individuals throughout their mobility experience. By conducting initial assessments to determine participants' current stage of intercultural sensitivity, practitioners can provide tailored pre-departure training, ongoing support during mobility, and post-mobility debriefing sessions. Regular check-ins and cultural mentoring during mobility can support students as they navigate cultural differences. Post-mobility debriefing sessions and action planning can help students reflect on their growth and apply their new intercultural competencies in their personal and professional lives. This approach ensures that participants are better equipped to adapt to new cultural environments, enriching their mobility experience and contributing to their long-term development.

The DMIS theory can be applied using the **Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)** tool (Hammer, Bennet and Wiseman, 2005) to measure how individuals think and feel about and thus react to cultural differences. The IDI is a scientifically valid and reliable psychometric instrument used globally since 1998 for individuals, groups, and entire organizations. Participants complete a 50-item questionnaire and receive scores for Perceived Orientation (PO) and Developmental Orientation (DO). The gap between these scores highlights areas for improvement, interpreted based on the six stages of Bennett's DMIS.

Unlike many other instruments, the IDI does not compare a person to typical behaviours or analyse behavioural reactions. It operates at the worldview level, focusing on how a person feels and thinks about cultural differences. This deeper level of cognitive experience guides and limits behaviour, helping answer the "so what" question: "Now that I know more about my behaviour and how I compare to others, what should I do next?" The answer is to understand and develop one's intercultural competence, leading to cognitive and behavioural change.

In mobility guidance, the IDI can be used for pre-departure assessments to tailor training, ongoing support during mobility, and post-mobility evaluations to measure progress and plan further development. It also helps prepare hosts by providing insights into participants' intercultural sensitivity levels. By integrating the IDI, practitioners can offer targeted support, enhancing participants' intercultural competence and adaptation to new cultural environments.

Both the IDI tool and the underlying DMIS theory are culture-general, addressing cultural differences stemming from national, regional, societal, family, organisational, and individual characteristics. The IDI was designed and validated cross-culturally to maintain this culture-general validity. Research shows that developing one's intercultural competence in one aspect of cultural difference (e.g., national origin) carries over to one's experience of all other types of cultural difference.

The IDI is developmental, measuring both one's self-perceived and actual place on the DMIS continuum. The results report encourages developmental thinking, addressing questions like: How does one's current degree of intercultural sensitivity affect interactions with others? What actions might further develop one's intercultural competence?

Besides the IDI tool, guidance practitioners can use self-assessment instruments (Paige et al, 2002) to help individuals reflect on learning and intercultural learning and which strategies they are using. These instruments can be used and evaluated individually and in groups (Kappler, Cohen, and Paige, 2009):

- Learning Style Survey - Assessing your own learning styles (Cohen, Oxford, and Chi),
- Language Strategy Use Inventory (Cohen Oxford, and Chi),
- Culture-Learning Strategies Inventory (Paige, Rong, Zheng and Kappler).

2.1.1 Triggers, coping skills and strategies

The perception of an experience abroad as positive or negative largely depends on triggers. **Triggers** are specific situations that conflict with participants' expectations during the mobility can still be remembered years later. They are mostly related to differences encountered with significant others, group dynamics (conflicts, feeling of solidarity, etc.) and hospitality (host family, etc.). Positive triggers enhance personal development, while negative triggers have the opposite effect.

Participants need to be prepared for various triggers before departure. The best strategy to avoid culture shock and its negative aspects is prevention. The support abroad should focus on creating positive triggers and learning to cope with negative ones. After the mobility, the follow-up should concentrate on interpreting and explaining triggers, addressing especially potential reversion (the other culture is praised to the skies in relation to one's own culture), duality (polarisation of cultural differences) and dealing with liminality (participants returning after a stay abroad indicate not feeling at home either in the home culture or the foreign culture). This way, guidance practitioners can help participants develop a sense of 'world citizenship'.

After returning home, participants may experience a reverse culture shock and need to adapt to their own culture again. Above mentioned self-assessment instruments may support participants to be aware of their progress in intercultural sensitivity, languages, learning styles, coping skills, etc.

Coping skills are relevant and crucial throughout life experiences, including learning and working mobility (Handbook on quality in learning mobility, 2024). Coping can be defined as the conscious and unconscious thoughts and behaviours that individuals use to manage internal and external stressful situations or to reduce and handle unpleasant emotions. In contrast to defence mechanisms, coping skills are conscious responses to a stressor (Algorani and Gupta, 2023).

Individuals have different coping strategies, one can actively cope with the challenges or avoid the situations. These strategies may involve cognitive efforts (such as reappraising a situation or denial), behavioural actions (like seeking support or problem-solving), or a combination of both. Coping skills can be centred on the problem (cognitive: manage the event) on the emotion (behavioural: regulate the emotion associated with a stressful situation).

Coping skills will not solve our underlying issues, but they are an important step along the path to recovery. Coping skills help us survive difficult emotions, thoughts and experiences. They give us a break from our pain, which in turn gives us space to build our personal skills, strengths and resources.

Individuals who exhibit challenging behaviours may lack effective coping skills to manage their emotions, stress, or environmental demands. Without appropriate coping strategies, they might rely on challenging behaviours as a way to cope.

Coping skills can be centred on the problem (cognitive: manage the event) or on the emotion (behavioural: regulate the emotion associated with a stressful situation).

Coping avoidance refers to avoiding the problem and wanting to reduce the stress and negative emotions. It can be:

- **Cognitive coping avoidance** when a person completely forgets about a problem or accepts the problem, but loses the hope to find a solution.
- **Behavioural coping avoidance:** when a person is looking for other activities, also emotional e.g. cry to the frustration.

Active coping refers to facing the problem in an open and direct way. It can be:

- **Active cognitive coping** when a person is looking for ways to solve the problem in another way (logical analysis) or realising that other people are in more difficult situations (positive reframing).
- **Active behavioural coping:** when a person is looking for support (e.g. talking to a friend) and developing an action plan to tackle the problem.

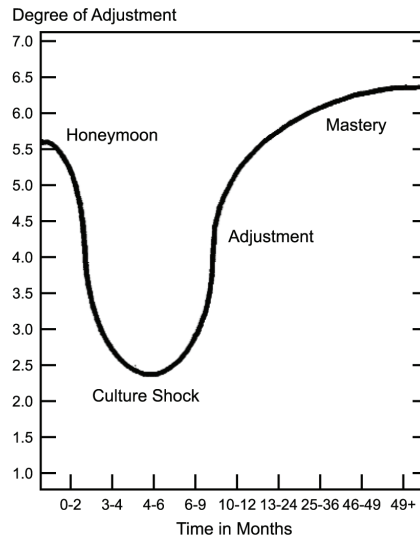
Coping strategies include among others: taking care of yourself (rest, developing daily routines, protecting health), reducing uncertainty (seek information, take action) and demands (establish priorities, eliminate some activities, reduce self-imposed demands), assuming control (make choices and decisions, make your needs known) finishing unfinished business (express emotions, set short-term goals) and taking advantage of your environment (establish a support group, use available resources, share in others' experiences).

2.1.2 Culture shock and culture adaptation

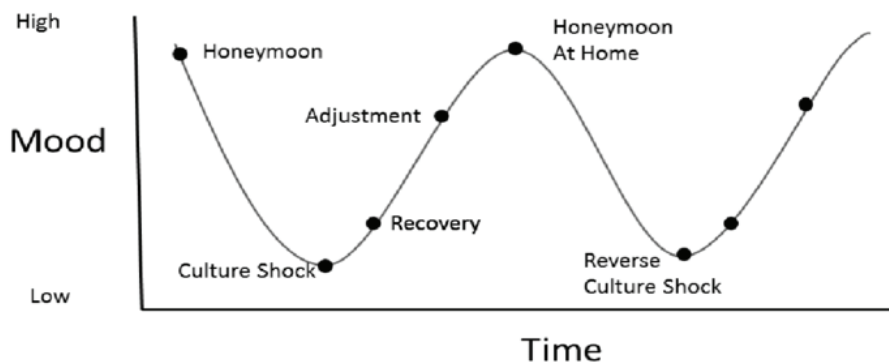
People living in a new culture often experience difficulties while adapting to a new way of doing things (Shaheen, 2004). **Culture shock** refers to the anxiety caused by losing familiar signs and symbols (Oberg, 1958). It encompasses feelings of helplessness, irritability, and fears of being cheated, or disregarded (Adler, 1977).

In addition to culture shock, it is important to consider culture surprise and culture stress (Bennett, 2002). While **culture shock** typically involves significant cultural differences (e.g. in values or norms), **culture surprise** refers to minor practical differences (e.g. how toilet facilities work), and **culture stress** describes the effort involved in managing small but cumulative challenges (e.g. queueing customs or social conventions). In short-term mobility programmes, especially when experienced in a group, participants may encounter only culture surprise or stress. Language skills are a key factor in mitigating these challenges: research has shown a negative correlation between language competence and the level of fear or adjustment problems (Hansel, 2005).

The **U-curve of adjustment**, introduced by Lysgaard (1955), is a classic model describing the emotional journey individuals may go through when entering a new culture. It typically outlines four stages: an initial honeymoon phase of excitement, followed by culture shock, then a period of gradual adjustment, and eventually adaptation or integration. The **W-curve model** extends this idea by including a re-entry phase, recognising that returning home can also involve a second dip in emotional well-being - commonly referred to as reverse culture shock - as individuals readjust to their home culture after an intense experience abroad.



The U-curve of cross-cultural adjustment (Black and Mendenhall, 1991)



Source: Based on the U-curve (Oberg 1960) and extended by (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963)


While both the U-curve and W-curve remain useful orientation tools, recent research highlights that cultural adaptation is rarely a linear or universal process. Learners may follow different paths depending on factors such as their prior intercultural experiences, identity, mobility format (e.g., short-term, virtual), and social background. For guidance practitioners, this underscores the importance of preparing participants not only for the challenges of going abroad, but also for the often underestimated process of returning home.

However, it is important to be careful and avoid overly simplistic approaches of culture shock and adaptation (La Brack, 2010). Although there are descriptions even in ancient Greek literature that show culture shock as a phenomenon, it has only become a subject of systematic research since the 1950s. Existing models of cultural adaptation often fail to accurately predict the sequence, duration and even the appearance of adaptation stages, as there are sufficient cases when students do not display one of the classical stages. As seen in comparison of traditional models of cultural adaptation (Jansone, 2015), later models (e.g. Pedersen, 1995; Otten, 2000) do not contain a clearly marked "crisis" phase and the terminology used to describe adaptation phases varies across models, reflecting differing understandings of each phase's meaning and significance.

Phase	Lysgaard (1955)	Pedersen (1995)	Otten (2000)
1.	Honeymoon Stage	Honeymoon Stage	Orientation period
2.	Increased Participation	Disintegration Stage	Discovering and interpreting cultural differences
3.	Crisis Stage	Autonomy Stage	Integration Stage
4.	Recovery Stage	Interdependence Stage	Reintegration Stage
5.	Adaptation Stage

Comparison of traditional models of cultural adaptation (Jansone, 2015)

One influential response to these limitations is **Kim's Integrative Theory of Communication and Cross-Cultural Adaptation** (2001), which replaces linear stage models with a cyclical, dynamic process. Adaptation is seen as a series of stress–adaptation–growth cycles, shaped by factors such as individual resilience, communication competence, social support, and environmental context. For guidance practitioners, this perspective underscores the importance of flexible, individualised support, rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all model of adjustment (Kim, 2008).



Questions for reflection

- Which theoretical frameworks discussed in this chapter do you find most applicable to your practice, and how can you integrate them more effectively?
- Reflect on your own intercultural experiences. At which stage of the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) do you think you currently are, and how can you progress to the next stage?
- Consider a time when you experienced culture shock or cultural adaptation. What strategies can you share with your clients to help them manage similar experiences?

2.2 Mobility guidance model

Guidance is crucial during learning mobility, providing essential support to participants as they navigate new environments and challenges. Guidance practitioners should be prepared to offer counselling services to help participants adjust to their new surroundings, manage stress, and overcome any difficulties they may encounter. This includes providing emotional support, helping participants develop coping strategies, and offering guidance on managing cultural differences and other challenges.

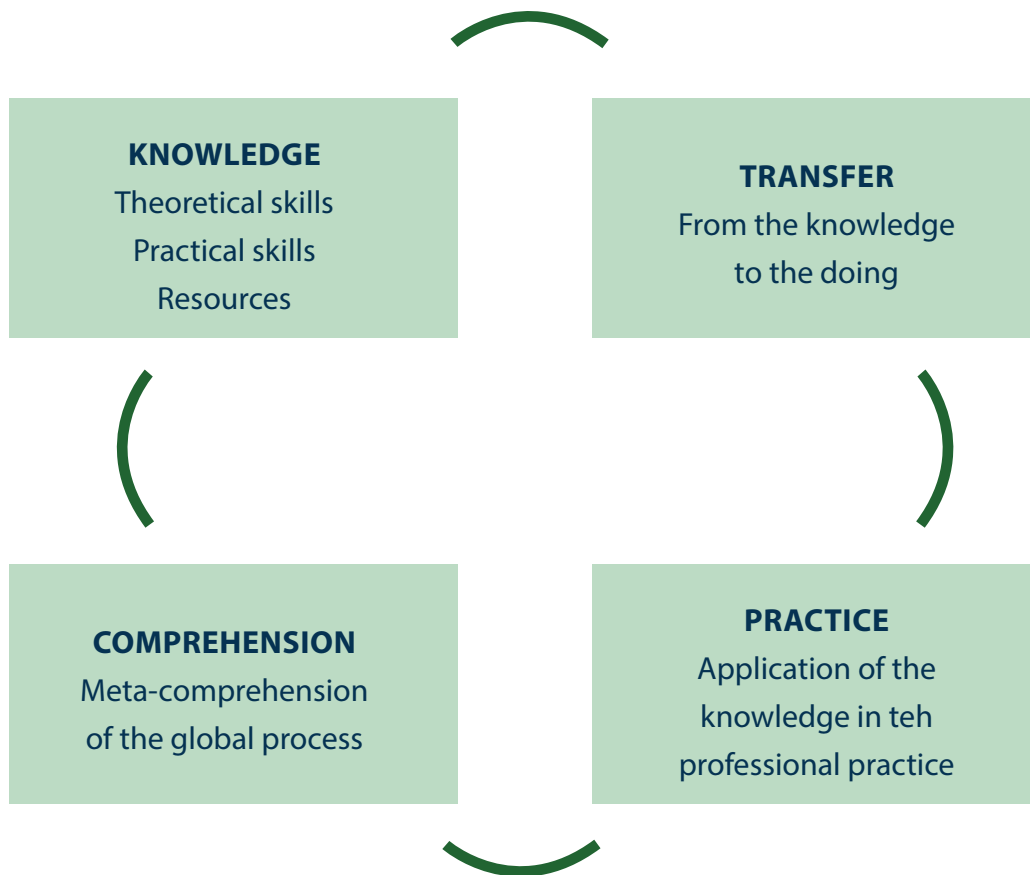
The mobility guidance model was designed by the initial authors of the handbook in the Euroguidance mobility working group. It outlines a comprehensive framework of interdependent stages before, during, and after mobility abroad. This framework is designed for guidance practitioners to use with various end-users, including both youth and adults.

The mobility guidance model is built upon several key components that ensure a holistic approach to supporting individuals through their international mobility experiences:

- 1. Psychological approach:** Emphasises the emotional and psychological aspects of mobility, including managing stress, anxiety, and cultural differences. This approach also encompasses the preparation of individuals for the challenges and opportunities of mobility, such as working with stereotypes and developing coping strategies.
- 2. Pedagogical model of competences:** Focuses on learning outcomes and the development of competencies, ensuring that participants are well-equipped to navigate new environments and challenges. This includes intercultural skills, such as recognising intercultural interactions, becoming aware of one's own stereotypes, and providing intercultural counselling to help participants adapt and thrive in diverse cultural settings.
- 3. Preparation for mobility:** Involves preparing individuals for the practical and logistical aspects of mobility, including administrative requirements, financial planning, accommodation, and parental counselling. This component ensures that participants are ready to face the operational challenges of living and studying abroad.

It is highly recommended that guidance practitioners have their own international mobility experience. This personal experience can enhance their guidance effectiveness, enabling them to provide more empathetic and informed support.

The mobility guidance process can be simplified into the following interdependent stages, which build upon each other to provide continuous support throughout the mobility experience:



Knowledge: Acquiring theoretical skills, practical skills, and resources necessary for mobility. This stage involves understanding the framework for guidance practitioners, the psychological approach, the pedagogical model of competences, and the preparation for mobility.

Transfer: Applying the acquired knowledge to practical situations. This stage involves transferring theoretical skills and resources into actionable plans and strategies for mobility.

Practice: Implementing knowledge and strategies in real-world scenarios. This stage includes the practical application of intercultural skills, managing cultural differences, and navigating new environments.

Comprehension: Achieving a meta-comprehension of the global process. This stage involves reflecting on the mobility experience, integrating it into personal and professional life, and utilising the learning outcomes for future development.

The model is divided into the following interdependent phases, which build upon each other to provide continuous support throughout the mobility experience:

- 1. Establishing the counselling relationship:** Building a strong relationship between the guidance practitioner and the client.

2. **Analysis of the individual development plan:** Evaluating, identifying problems, and working on individual stereotypes.
3. **Supporting the client's mobility plan:** Developing strategies to reduce anxiety and stress, and providing essential information.
4. **Concluding the preparatory phase prior to mobility:** Reviewing the different chronological stages of mobility.
5. **Monitoring during mobility:** Offering support during adaptation, crisis, transition, or other situations related to cultural interactions.
6. **Evaluation and utilising the experience following return:** Reflecting on the mobility experience and integrating it into personal and professional life.

2.2.1 Establishing the counselling relationship

The initial stage of the mobility guidance model focuses on establishing a strong guidance relationship between the guidance practitioner and the client. This phase involves self-assessment, evaluation of intercultural competencies, and reflection on ethical standards. Both the guidance practitioner and the client perform an initial (self-)assessment of their intercultural competencies and attitudes. They also foster interaction and build a strong guidance relationship through engagement and openness.

Guidance practitioner's role:

- **Self-assessment:** The guidance practitioner evaluates their knowledge of intercultural interaction and their personal attitudes towards cultural interactions, including their reactions and stereotypes when faced with 'the other'. If necessary, the guidance practitioner should participate in training or professional development to enhance their competencies.
- **Ethical reflection:** The guidance practitioner reflects on their ethical standards and ascertains the quality of the guidance services offered, based on quality indicators known from external evaluations.
- **Referral:** According to the IAEVG Ethical Guidelines (2025), it is an ethical responsibility to refer a client to another specialist if the guidance practitioner's competencies do not meet the client's needs. Therefore, this initial (self-)assessment and the identification and remediation of knowledge or quality deficiencies before starting work with the client are essential.

Client's role:

- **Self-assessment:** The client assesses their personal attitudes towards cultural interactions, observed personal reactions, and stereotypes when dealing with 'others'. This assessment can be done independently or with the help of an external evaluator, who can be the guidance practitioner.

- **Engagement:** The client's role is characterised by involvement, openness, and willingness to participate, indicating interaction and building relationships.

2.2.2 Analysis of the individual development plan

The second phase of the mobility guidance model focuses on a comprehensive analysis of the individual development plan, encompassing personal and professional goal setting, needs analysis, and cultural preparedness. For the guidance practitioner, this involves evaluating, identifying problems, and working with personal stereotypes, drawing from personal experience, training, case evaluation, and analysis. Forms of work include simulating intercultural guidance situations, group work with other professionals, training, and internships.

If a guidance practitioner has personal mobility experience, it serves as a foundation to support clients in understanding ethnocentrism or ethnorelativism and in developing individual strategies for solving intercultural problems. The guidance practitioner plans, analyses, evaluates, and identifies their personal development as a mobility specialist.

At this stage, the client reflects on previous intercultural contacts, contextualises experiences, and identifies their reactions in cultural interaction situations. Additionally, the client should identify their personal and professional goals, specific needs, and expectations from the mobility experience. This phase also involves analyzing the client's interests, strengths, and areas for development.

Guidance practitioner's role:

- **Professional development and training:** Utilise training, professional development, access to scientific literature, and relevant online resources. Reflect on personal mobility experiences to deconstruct ethnocentrism and integrate daily intercultural experiences into guidance practice, contributing to the development of an individual intercultural coping strategy.
- **Intercultural guidance practice:** Engage in group work with other professionals to simulate intercultural guidance scenarios, participate in training and guided practice, and share positive experiences from professional colleagues.
- **Evaluation and analysis:** Evaluate and analyse the root causes of mistakes to improve future practice. Assist the client in identifying their personal and professional goals, specific needs, and expectations from the mobility experience. analyse the client's interests, strengths, and areas for development.
- **Parental involvement:** Assess the level of parental support, address any concerns or fears parents may have, and provide guidance on how they can best support their child throughout the mobility experience.

Client's role:

- **Goal setting and needs analysis:** Identify personal and professional goals, specific needs, and expectations from the mobility experience. Reflect on interests, strengths, and areas for development.
- **Practical and intercultural preparedness:** Implement practical aspects of daily life related to mobility, such as transport and accommodation. Reflect on the consequences of prior intercultural contacts, including language, non-verbal communication, and immersion in different groups. Contextualise previous personal experiences related to intercultural interactions and identify stereotypical representations and judgments, as well as individual reactions in intercultural situations.
- **Parental involvement:** Engage with parents to understand their level of support, address any concerns, and discuss how they can best support the mobility experience.

2.2.3 Mobility plan support

In the third stage of the mobility guidance model, the guidance practitioner supports the client by helping them choose the right mobility program based on their individual needs and goals, developing strategies to reduce anxiety and stress, establishing a communication system for follow-up and emergencies, providing essential information, and facilitating mobility, while continuing to analyse personal stereotypes related to intercultural experiences.

The client works together with the guidance practitioner to compile essential information and develop an individual strategy to overcome intercultural problems. The practitioner provides information on mobility programs and assesses their alignment with the client's personal and professional goals to facilitate informed decision-making. Both the practitioner and the client are expected to be aware of their personal subjectivity in relation to intercultural experiences.

Guidance practitioner's role:

- **Program selection and alignment:** Provide information for clients to choose the right programme based on factors such as goals, duration, choice of country, funding opportunities, and individual needs. Provide information on mobility programmes and assess their alignment with the client's personal and professional goals to facilitate informed decision-making. Conduct resource analysis to ensure the client has all necessary information for their mobility programme.
- **Support and strategy development:** Assist the client with resource analysis and financial planning, including budgeting, scholarship opportunities, financial management tips, and providing information on financial resources. Develop strategies for reducing anxiety and stress, utilising the benefits of culture and individual intercultural coping. Tailor support to the client's individual needs

and aspirations. Work with the client to compile essential information and develop an individual strategy to overcome intercultural problems. Also include sustainability considerations (eco-friendly travel options) to promote responsible mobility.

- **Communication and information:** Establish a communication system for follow-up and emergency situations. Provide essential information to reduce anxiety and stress during mobility (emergency contacts, addresses, transportation, accommodation, meals, other advice regarding daily life practicalities). Highlight the benefits of cultural contact that can play a facilitating role (art, music, dance, cuisine, nature, sport, etc.).
- **Stereotype analysis:** Continue to analyse and reflect on personal stereotypes about mobility and intercultural experiences. Ensure both the practitioner and the client are aware of their personal subjectivity in relation to intercultural experiences.
- **Parent counselling:** Address frequently asked questions from parents and provide guidance on how they can best support their child throughout the mobility experience.

Client's role:

- **Program selection and alignment:** Work with the guidance practitioner to choose the right mobility programme based on personal and professional goals, duration, choice of country, funding opportunities, and individual needs. Conduct resource analysis to ensure all necessary information for the mobility programme is gathered.
- **Strategy development and information management:** Develop an individual intercultural coping strategy and keep track of essential information to reduce anxiety and stress during mobility (emergency contacts, addresses, transportation, accommodation, meals, and other advice regarding daily life practicalities). Gather information about personally relevant points of cultural contact that can play a facilitating role (art, music, dance, cuisine, nature, sport, etc.). Include financial planning (budgeting, scholarship opportunities, financial management tips) and sustainability considerations (eco-friendly travel options) to promote responsible mobility.
- **Stereotype analysis:** Analyse and reflect on personal stereotypes concerning mobility and intercultural experiences. Be aware of personal subjectivity in relation to intercultural experiences.
- **Parent counselling:** Engage with parents to address their questions and understand how they can best support the mobility experience.

2.2.4 Concluding the preparatory phase before mobility

The fourth stage of the mobility guidance model is the same for both the guidance practitioner and the client and is focused on creating a comprehensive mobility plan. The plan includes administrative

preparation, practical organisation, financial planning and funding opportunities, reviewing the different chronological stages of mobility, considering coping skills, and cultural preparation. This task can be achieved by the client individually or in cooperation with the guidance practitioner.

Guidance practitioner's role:

- **Administrative preparation:** Ensure the client has all necessary documents (passport, visa, health and insurance regulations) and understands the administrative requirements.
- **Practical organisation:** Assist the client in searching for suitable accommodation and understanding the local housing market. Ensure the client has all essential information to reduce anxiety and stress during mobility (emergency contacts, addresses, transportation, meals, other advice regarding daily life practicalities).
- **Financial planning and funding opportunities:** Review funding opportunities and ensure the client has a clear understanding of financial resources available. Assist with financial planning, including budgeting, scholarship opportunities, and financial management tips.
- **Coping skills and cultural preparation:** Present and discuss coping skills to help the client manage challenges during mobility. Provide resources and support for cultural preparation, including language learning, cultural norms, and local customs. Assist the client in reviewing the different chronological stages of mobility, ensuring all necessary steps are covered.

Client's role:

- **Administrative preparation:** Gather all necessary documents (passport, visa, health and insurance regulations) and understand the administrative requirements.
- **Practical organisation:** Search for suitable accommodation and understand the local housing market. Keep track of essential information to reduce anxiety and stress during mobility (emergency contacts, addresses, transportation, meals, and other advice regarding daily life practicalities).
- **Financial planning and funding opportunities:** Review funding opportunities and ensure a clear understanding of financial resources available. Work on financial planning, including budgeting, scholarship opportunities, and financial management tips.
- **Coping skills and cultural preparation:** Understand and practise coping skills presented by the guidance practitioner to manage challenges during mobility. Engage in cultural preparation, including language learning, understanding cultural norms, and local customs. Review the different chronological stages of mobility, ensuring all necessary steps are covered.

2.2.5 Monitoring during mobility

Monitoring within the mobility guidance model primarily relates to the intercultural experience and its psychological aspects. The client needs to find a new position towards 'others', develop a sense of belonging, re-evaluate perceptions and stereotypes about 'others', and develop coping strategies for intercultural problems, if necessary, by contacting a guidance practitioner or mentor.

The guidance practitioner offers support during adaptation, crisis, transition, or other situations related to cultural interactions and provides assistance to the client in developing a sense of belonging to the new environment. Additionally, the guidance practitioner reassesses the knowledge and skills needed for mobility guidance. This stage also includes networking and community building, maintaining effective communication channels, and preparing for the return phase towards the end of mobility.

Guidance practitioner's role:

- **Support and monitoring:** Offer support and monitor beneficiaries during the adaptation period, crisis, transitions, or other situations in the intercultural context. Help the client develop a feeling of belonging in the new environment through networking and community building, providing tips, support, and referrals to facilitate this process.
- **Maintained communication:** Maintain a database of mobility guidance clients and ensure effective communication channels are established and maintained throughout the mobility period.
- **Preparation for return and self-evaluation:** Assist the client in preparing for the return phase towards the end of mobility, including what comes next and the necessary preparations. Reassess the own knowledge and skills needed for mobility guidance activities, evaluating the competencies and aptitudes necessary for effective mobility guidance.

Client's role:

- **Intercultural immersion and belonging:** Position oneself in the intercultural immersion situation, finding one's 'new' position in relation to 'the other'. Participate in group activities and engage in networking and community-building activities to develop a feeling of belonging. Utilise tips, support, and referrals provided by the guidance practitioner to enhance the sense of belonging.
- **Reframing stereotypes and coping strategies:** Reframe representations and stereotypes of 'the other' and develop an individual intercultural coping strategy. Maintain effective communication with the guidance practitioner or mentor, utilising established communication channels.
- **Preparation for return:** Prepare for the return phase towards the end of mobility, including what comes next and the necessary preparations. Contact the guidance practitioner or mentor if needed for assistance or guidance during adaptation, crisis, transitions, or other situations in the intercultural context.

2.2.6 Evaluation and utilising the experiences after mobility

In the final stage of the mobility guidance model, the guidance practitioner and the client work together to evaluate and utilise the experiences gained during mobility. The guidance practitioner reflects with the client on the mobility process, provides follow-up support, and assists with reintegration, including connecting clients with networks and alumni associations. They also disseminate the learning outcomes, validate the competencies gained, and ensure continuous improvement of the mobility guidance process.

The client, on the other hand, reflects on their mobility experience, valorises the learning achieved, and shares their insights with others. They integrate the intercultural experience into their personal and professional life, seek validation and recognition of their competencies, and engage with networks to stay connected with international communities.

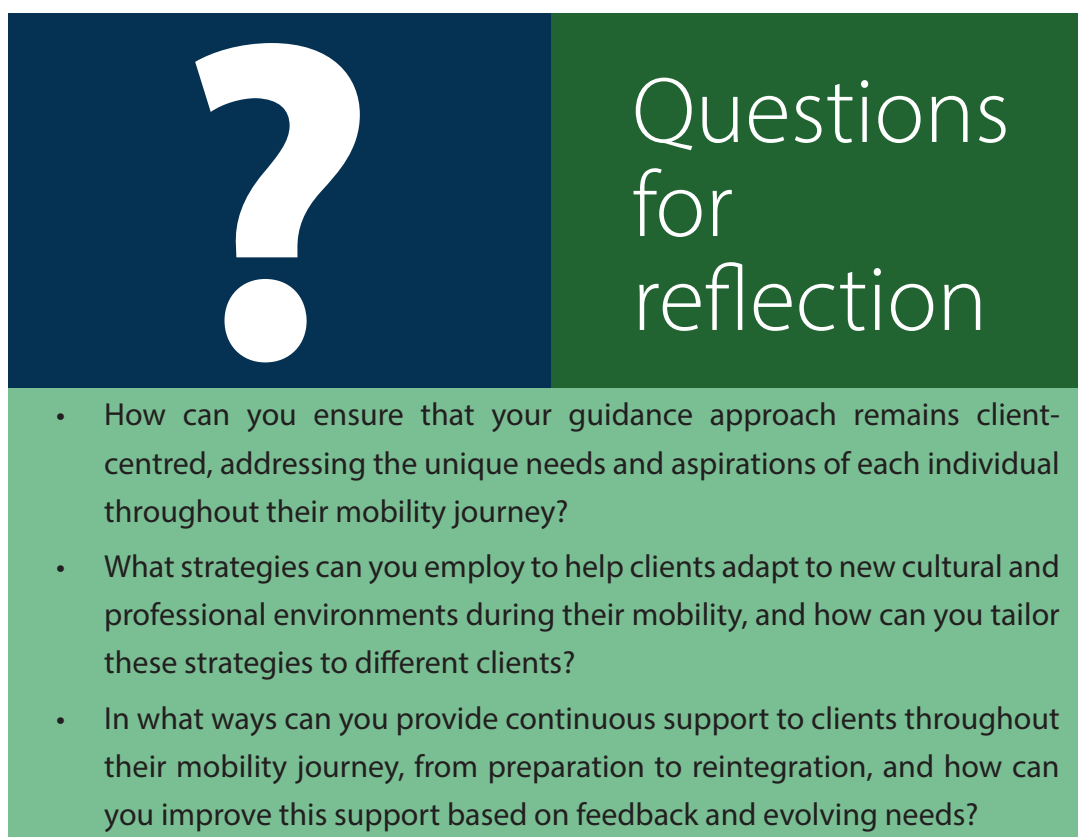
Guidance practitioner's role:

- **Follow-up and reintegration support:** Provide follow-up support after mobility, including resources and assistance for job searches, networking, and leveraging the mobility experience in job applications and interviews. Help clients identify key competencies gained and support their reintegration into the home environment. Connect clients with networks, alumni associations, and other opportunities to stay engaged with international communities.
- **Dissemination and validation:** Disseminate the experience and valorise the learning achieved to increase awareness about the benefits of mobility. Share good practices and publish studies or articles in professional journals. Assist clients in the validation and recognition of their learning and competencies gained during mobility.
- **Reflection and continuous improvement:** Reflect and provide feedback into the initial stage of the mobility process, ensuring a cycle of continuous improvement. Critically analyse and convey the mobility process to stakeholders.

Client's role:

- **Reflection and valorisation:** Analyse the mobility experience and valorise the learning achieved within a personal context, further studies, or work. Identify key competencies gained during mobility. Develop coping strategies and integrate the intercultural experience into personal life and the home environment.
- **Sharing and reintegration:** Share the mobility experience with other potential beneficiaries, highlighting the benefits and learning outcomes. Engage in social, cultural, and professional reintegration in the home country. Utilise the mobility experience in job searches, networking, and leveraging the experience in job applications and interviews. Join networks, alumni associations, and other connection opportunities to stay engaged with international communities.

- **Validation and recognition:** Seek validation and recognition of the learning and competencies gained during mobility.



Questions for reflection

- How can you ensure that your guidance approach remains client-centred, addressing the unique needs and aspirations of each individual throughout their mobility journey?
- What strategies can you employ to help clients adapt to new cultural and professional environments during their mobility, and how can you tailor these strategies to different clients?
- In what ways can you provide continuous support to clients throughout their mobility journey, from preparation to reintegration, and how can you improve this support based on feedback and evolving needs?

2.3 Quality in mobility guidance

Quality in mobility guidance is essential for ensuring that individuals have meaningful and impactful experiences during their international exchanges. Whether for educational, professional, or personal development, mobility can significantly enhance an individual's skills, knowledge, and cultural understanding. This subchapter aims to provide guidance practitioners with the principles and best practices necessary to achieve high-quality mobility experiences.

The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council [European Quality Charter for Mobility](#) (2006) focuses on the qualitative aspects of mobility and serves as a reference document for international exchanges. It is available to organisations responsible for exchanges and provides guidance to young adults and adults in learning or other mobility to enhance their personal and professional development. The Charter consists of ten principles implemented on a voluntary and flexible basis, adaptable to the nature and characteristics of each stay. These principles are:

1. **Information and guidance:** Ensure equal access to reliable information and guidance for mobility. Provide clear information on the role and tasks of sending and hosting organisations and about various education and training systems.

2. **Learning plan:** Develop a learning plan agreed upon by sending and hosting organisations and participants. Outline objectives, expected learning outcomes, and implementation strategies. Consider reintegration and evaluation when developing the plan.
3. **Personalisation:** Tailor mobility to fit the personal learning pathways, skills, and motivation of participants. Ensure mobility supplements or develops participants' skills.
4. **General preparation:** Provide tailored preparation covering linguistic, pedagogical, administrative, legal, personal, cultural, and financial aspects. Ensure preparation is tailored to participants' specific needs.
5. **Linguistic aspects:** Emphasise language skills for effective learning and intercultural communication. Include language assessment, courses, and support in the host country.
6. **Logistical support:** Offer necessary logistical support, including travel arrangements, insurance, and accommodation. Address safety issues relevant to the stay.
7. **Mentoring:** Provide mentoring schemes to help participants integrate into the host environment. Act as a contact point for ongoing assistance.
8. **Recognition:** Facilitate recognition and certification of mobility periods. Use Europass to document learning outcomes.
9. **Reintegration and evaluation:** Assist participants in reintegrating and evaluating their mobility experience. Provide guidance on using competencies and skills acquired during the stay.
10. **Commitments and responsibilities:** Clearly define responsibilities among sending and hosting organisations and participants. Confirm responsibilities in writing.

The [Handbook on Quality in Learning Mobility](#) (2019) by the Council of Europe Youth Partnership in the framework of the European Platform for Learning Mobility, provides useful answers to questions on how to organise learning mobility projects with and for young people. The handbook offers a quality framework for learning mobility, consisting of a set of 22 mobility principles and 119 quality indicators. These serve as reflection tools and targeted checklists for practitioners to ensure the learning outcomes of the project. The handbook was revised due to the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on learning mobility, including new topics such as virtual mobility, environmental sustainability, and mental health in the [second edition](#) (2024).

The mobility experience is a deeply personal process that strengthens transversal skills such as self-confidence, adaptability, stress management, and open-mindedness. Guidance practitioners must understand the underlying mechanisms to carry out an assessment and a quality approach in mobility guidance. Assessments of mobility guidance are primarily quantitative, such as the number of interviews or information sessions. However, these measures do not necessarily prove the quality of mobility guidance or its impact on the final decision or mobility itself. It is important to note that the benefits of mobility guidance may become apparent at a later date, particularly in individual mobility.

To integrate quality in mobility guidance, mobility should be promoted as part of training and professional

integration programmes. This could involve observing personal development (independence, adaptability, linguistic skills, etc.) or studying professional integration and study programmes.

Assessment of the mobility project by a guidance practitioner involves:

- Assessing the motivation and commitment of the guidance practitioners and their suitability.
- Evaluating whether young people have the support of their family.
- Considering attributes such as the ability to improvise, independence, maturity, and the ability to overcome stereotypes.
- Assessing project feasibility, including cost, practical and administrative details, and timeframes.
- Identifying the risks associated with each mobility.
- Determining the principal gain for each programme.

Quality assessment of mobility guidance is crucial for strengthening visibility and promoting mobility guidance. It involves taking a step back to examine and discuss practice with professional peers. This process is not time-consuming but essential for continuous improvement.

Mobility guidance encompasses administrative, psychological, and societal aspects, as well as networking skills, knowledge of professional tools, monitoring, and continuous training.

Quality indicators are determined for standard verification and are recorded in the following subchapters in a grid used to assess the quality approach. These indicators enable the guidance practitioner to analyse practices, decide where they stand, and identify the need for continuing personal education.

2.3.1 Theory-practice-integration

Theory-practice-integration allows guidance practitioners to guarantee quality of mobility guidance. The guidance practitioner will be able to refer to a theoretical model and link theory and practice as well as demonstrate self-reflexivity and self-analysis. This ability to refer to a theoretical model can be assessed using the following guiding points.

- Practitioner knowledge acquired is proven by formal certifications.
- Link between mobility guidance theory and practice: ability to put knowledge acquired into practice and explain the connection.
- Ability to self-reflect: reflexive analysis of the various stages of the “process” so as to continue it or adjust it if necessary.
- Knowledge of the theories that influence a person’s choices.

2.3.2 Psychological aspects

Mobility guidance requires a deep understanding of the psychological factors inherent in individual and group relationships. This understanding is essential for providing effective and personalised support to clients as they navigate their mobility experiences. The guidance practitioner must have a range of skills, including interview techniques, motivational strategies, knowledge of psychological tools, and an understanding of choice processes.

- Sound command of **interview techniques** (ability to listen, analyse requests, reformulate, and show empathy and detachment), acquired during training regularly assessed using a system specific to each structure.
- Sound command of **motivational techniques** (Skills to motivate, work on personal representations, and understand group phenomena), regularly assessed using a system specific to each structure.
- Knowledge of **psychological tools** (Knowledge of tools to highlight interests, assess motivation, and establish a clear position), proven by the application of specific standards.
- Knowledge of the mechanisms that influence a **person's choices** (Understanding the steps and psychological stages involved in making choices during mobility experiences).
- Ability to describe their own representations and to clearly express their values.
- Ability to explain the behavioural differences which enable the client's needs to be met.

Mobility guidance is provided in both individual and group settings. During individual interviews, practitioners carry out an in-depth analysis of the client's request in an attentive and empathetic environment. Reformulation and knowledge of **interview techniques** ensure a clear understanding of the client's needs.

In group activities, practitioners work on representations of people in connection with intercultural exchanges. Knowledge of group phenomena and **motivational techniques** allows the free expression of opinions and facilitates exchange.

Psychological tools are essential in mobility guidance. These tools help practitioners to highlight the client's interests, abilities, flexibility, and adaptability. They also enable the assessment of a client's motivation to commit to a mobility experience.

Mobility guidance requires a deep understanding of **choice processes**. The practitioner must be aware of the steps involved in making a choice and the psychological stages clients go through during their mobility experience. This knowledge allows practitioners to provide support at each stage of the process, from the initial decision to participate in a mobility experience to the reintegration phase.

2.3.3 Societal aspects

Mobility guidance must consider societal factors related to the social representation of people, their generational context, and their position in the social sphere. These factors are crucial for providing tailored and effective support to clients as they navigate their mobility experiences.

- Knowledge of social communities in reference to a sociological model.
- The ability to place an individual within their culture whilst taking into consideration individual development stages.
- Ability to take social and cultural stereotypes into consideration.
- Ability to develop suitable behavioural patterns in professional situations and in all circumstances.

Understanding the social and cultural contexts of individuals is essential for effective mobility guidance. Practitioners must **differentiate** between audiences and group representations, recognising how an individual's background influences their mobility experiences. This approach ensures a stereotype-free environment and stays attuned to the **generational context and micro-cultures** of those interested in undertaking an exchange. Guidance practitioners should stay informed about the preferences and challenges of young people and keep up with current trends and developments in mobility experiences to ensure that the advice provided is timely and relevant.

Tailoring guidance to reflect the diversity of target audiences is key. This includes promoting a neutral approach that respects differences and ensures inclusivity. Adapting communication channels to suit the preferences of different audiences can also enhance engagement.

The ability to personalise an individual's unique situation in their social and cultural context is important. This involves being aware of the social representations of various environments and encouraging the emergence of individual positioning.

2.3.4 Information

Mobility guidance relies on reliable and up-to-date information, which is disseminated using adequate technological channels and with an educational concern that enables users to access the information easily. This ensures that clients receive accurate and timely information to support their mobility experiences.

- Ability to use ICT and information and guidance tools.
- Ability to use ICT to design, create, update and disseminate information.
- Ability to summarise and adapt information tools to suit specific audiences (language, medium, level, format, style, etc.).

- Ability to formulate information adapted to suit specific users.
- Gain personal mobility experience which reinforces their expertise in the field (study or work placements, etc).
- A sound linguistic knowledge which enables them to access professional information and work in networks.

Having a strong command of ICT is essential for creating, updating, and sharing information effectively. This includes using the latest software and hardware to develop and disseminate informational resources. Guidance practitioners must be able to manage information and provide reliable, up-to-date information.

Continuous learning is vital for keeping information up-to-date and relevant. This involves attending workshops, webinars, and courses related to mobility guidance and **information management**. Engaging in personal mobility experiences also provides firsthand knowledge and insights. Effective information management ensures that the information provided is accurate and reliable.

Disseminating information with an educational concern facilitates the client's access to the information. This involves using clear and concise language, avoiding jargon, and presenting information in an organised and user-friendly manner. Additionally, practitioners must be able to adapt the **transmission of information** according to the profile of the client and be familiar with the client's information access processes.



Questions for reflection

- What measures can you implement to ensure the quality and effectiveness of your mobility guidance services?
- How can you continue to develop your professional skills and knowledge to stay current with best practices in mobility guidance?
- In what ways can you incorporate feedback from clients and peers to improve your guidance practices and outcomes?

3.1 Trainings

The Euroguidance Network supports mobility for guidance practitioners through various initiatives, including professional exchanges, seminars, study visits, e-learning courses, webinars and conferences.

Academia Study Exchange Programme has an objective to promote mobility among guidance practitioners, enhance European networking and cooperation in lifelong guidance and foster the exchange of best practices and methods among practitioners. Academia is a network of European partners, including Euroguidance centres and specialised guidance institutions. Launched in 1995, over 2,000 practitioners have benefited and strengthened the European dimension in guidance. Activities include Annual 3-5 day exchanges in European countries focusing on education systems, best practices, and topics like drop-out prevention, school-to-work transitions, skill development, and e-counselling, job shadowing in education and employment organizations. Each participating country organises the application for their national guidance practitioners. Contact your national Academia coordinator for more information.

Cross Border Seminars bring together guidance practitioners, policy makers, experts and others related to guidance from different European countries to exchange their expertise and innovative guidance practices. Two-day seminars with thematic workshops on European guidance topics and methods bring together guidance practitioners and experts from Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Euroguidance network designed (France, Latvia, Croatia, Germany, Slovenia) **eCourse on Europass for guidance practitioners** in different settings, which includes primary and secondary schools, VET, higher education, employment etc., who want to enhance their guidance skills and understand different ways to use Europass as a tool for guidance. The course is designed as a self-paced and self-learning course. To participate fully in the course, users need to register for free on the Europass portal. Registration for the eCourse is free and so are all of the resources referenced in the course. The registration on the course platform being completely free and unrestricted, the eCourse is in reality available to anyone interested in using Europass for guidance. They may be members of the school communities including teachers, youth educators, school masters, or anybody who works with clients who need to identify their competences, present them in a transparent way and apply for jobs or find suitable learning opportunities throughout Europe. The course includes texts, videos, practical materials, quizzes and different visuals.

Euroguidance network has several **E-learning courses on learning mobility and mobility guidance**. **Mobility Guidance and Counselling (France)** focuses on enhancing guidance skills and understanding mobility as a tool for guidance. **Nordic Baltic Course on Mobility Guidance** covers multiculturalism, learning, and work mobility in career development. **Distant Course in Mobility Guidance (Sweden)** is an online only course including the awarding of ELD competence cards to those who finish and certificate from the Swedish Council for Higher Education. Guidance practitioners are learning about the concept

"Ivägledning" – guiding away (6 weeks, 3-4 hours/week). **Multiculturalism, Learning, and Work Mobility (Estonia)** includes self-analysis, theory, exercises, multiple-choice tests, and webinars, 104 academic hours (4 ECTS) over 4 months, E-course Quality label since 2020.

Other training opportunities include **Euroguidance study visits**, where practitioners visit various organizations active in education and employment and **Euroguidance Webinars** that are online sessions covering current topics in mobility guidance.

3.2 Resources

There are several tools and resources that guidance practitioners can use to support clients interested in learning or working mobility.

The **Euroguidance network** website includes "**Study in...**" with country-specific information pages on all aspects of studying as well as practical tips on living in the respective country. Further general information on scholarships and funding are available on [Study in Europe](#). The Euroguidance website also features **monthly newsletters, events, insight articles** and a **database of good practices**. Guidance practitioners can subscribe to [Euroguidance network monthly newsletter](#) to get the recent guidance information and follow Euroguidance network Facebook and LinkedIn social media.

Europass is a set of online tools and resources for learning and career development. This service is provided free of charge in 31 different languages. It can be easily used by individuals to support them in presenting their skills, qualifications, and experiences in a standardised way, facilitating learning and working mobility. Europass is your free set of online tools to help you manage your career throughout your life, whether starting in your first job or looking for new challenges. With Europass one can:

- Create your personal record of all your skills, qualifications and experiences,
- Identify and reflect on your skills,
- Receive personalised job suggestions,
- Prepare and keep track of applications and cover letters for different courses and studies,
- Discover learning and job opportunities in Europe,
- Store all your documents and files in one secure location.

The **European Qualifications Framework (EQF)** is a translation tool to make qualifications from another country easier to understand and more comparable. It aims to support cross-border mobility of learners and workers, promote lifelong learning and professional development across Europe. The eight-level framework based on learning outcomes covers all types and levels of qualifications, with level 1 being the lowest and 8 the highest level.

The **European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)** is a technical framework for the transfer, recognition and accumulation of individuals' learning outcomes with a view to achieving a qualification. ECVET aims to support the mobility of European citizens, facilitating lifelong learning - achieved in formal, non-formal and informal settings - and providing greater transparency in relation to individual learning experiences, making it more attractive to move between different countries and different learning environments.

ESCO (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations) is the European multilingual classification of Skills, Competences and Occupations. It works as a dictionary, describing, identifying and classifying professional occupations and skills relevant for the EU labour market and education and training. It allows different online platforms to use ESCO for services like matching job seekers to jobs on the basis of their skills, suggesting training to people who want to reskill or upskill etc.

EURES (European Employment Services) is a cooperation network designed to facilitate the free movement of workers within Europe. EURES advisers are trained specialists who provide the three basic EURES services of information, guidance and placement, to both jobseekers and employers interested in the European job market. **Living and Working database** on EURES Job Mobility Portal provides living and working conditions as well as labour market information. There is information on a number of important issues such as finding accommodation, finding a school, taxes, cost of living, health, social legislation, comparability of qualifications, etc. **EURES Targeted Mobility Scheme** is an action promoting professional mobility by supporting jobseekers with both high and low qualifications. Available support can include targeted allowances, funding language courses, recognition of qualifications, travel and subsistence expenses.

Erasmus+ programme supports education, training, youth and sport in Europe with a strong focus on social inclusion, the green and digital transitions, and promoting young people's participation in democratic life. It includes the European Education Area, Digital Education Action Plan, the European Skills Agenda, the European Pillar of Social Rights and the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027.

The **European Solidarity Corps** is an initiative which creates opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in projects in their own country or abroad that benefit communities and people around Europe. **Youthpass**, used in the European Solidarity Corps, is a tool for young volunteers to take stock of their activities and highlight the skills they have developed. Youthpass is the recognition instrument developed for the projects realised in the European youth programmes. Through the Youthpass certificate, participation in such projects can be recognised as an educational experience and a period of non-formal and informal learning. Youthpass foresees a process applied throughout the project life-cycle to support the learning of participants. It also serves as a strategy that improves the recognition of non-formal learning in Europe. It is a good way for young people to reflect on what they've done during their stay, so that they can take up new projects in their own country or abroad again.

The **European Apprentices network** is a network of apprentices at European level, established in 2017 to make sure that the voice of young apprentices is heard in discussions related to VET, in particular for apprenticeships. It is formed by current apprentices and former apprentices, representatives of student

structures and representatives of youth labour unions.

Eurydice is a network whose task is to explain how education systems are organised in Europe and how they work. They publish descriptions of national education systems, comparative studies devoted to specific topics, indicators and statistics in the field of education. The European Commission's Mobility Scoreboard follows up on the 2011 'Youth on the Move' Recommendation of the Council of the European Union, providing a framework for monitoring progress made by European countries in creating a positive environment supporting learner mobility. It contains scoreboard indicators in the area of higher education and initial vocational education and training.

The **Enic-Naric network** is a collaboration between two international networks focused on the recognition of qualifications. There are national information centres in 55 countries, which implement the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention (1997). ENIC-NARICs give information on recognition to individuals wishing to study/work abroad (information on recognition of diplomas and periods of study abroad for academic and professional purposes), credential evaluators (information on recognition tools, sources and procedures to evaluate foreign qualifications), higher education institutions (information on academic recognition procedures of different foreign qualifications) and employers (information on a candidate's foreign qualification and on professional recognition procedures).

The European youth information centre **Eurodesk** provides information on opportunities related to learning mobility, youth work, and European programs. It updates and manages content on the European Youth Portal. The main focus of the network is on helping young people, youth workers, and professionals find information about study, volunteer, and work abroad opportunities, youth exchanges, European funding programs like Erasmus+ as well as competitions, scholarships, and internships in Europe.

EURAXESS - Researchers in Motion is a unique pan-European initiative delivering information and support services to professional researchers. Backed by the European Union, member states and associated countries, it supports researcher mobility and career development, while enhancing scientific collaboration between Europe and the world. Researchers seeking to advance their careers and personal development by moving to other countries can take advantage of Researchers in Motion one-stop shop. In addition to the information on training and jobs, this electronic gateway is the entry point to a wealth of practical information on living, working and relaxing in the European countries involved. EURAXESS is also responsible for **Science4Refugees**, a Commission's initiative helping refugee researchers find suitable jobs in today's challenging research landscape. Part of the initiative is the Science4Refugees Research Buddies, supporting refugee scientists in finding European researchers to discuss problems, find solutions and study together, by matching their research field, scientific studies and interests.

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (**CEDEFOP**) plays a crucial role in promoting and supporting learning and working mobility within Europe, particularly in the context of vocational education and training. It has established **CareersNet**, an expert network for lifelong guidance and career development. The network was created to share knowledge and to collect reliable information, enabling comparative analysis of national guidance systems on a European scale and facilitating transfer

and potential adaptation of different existing practices. CareersNet aims to generate new knowledge and evidence while offering members opportunities for peer learning and collegial exchange. The network also responds to Cedefop's need to have access to stable independent contact points for providing insights on national developments and the national relevance of EU initiatives, independently of changes in government, national or European policy.

The **European Training Foundation** is an agency of the European Union (EU) helping EU neighbouring countries to reform their education and training systems as part of EU external relations policies. By supporting human capital development, the ETF contributes to social and economic development and long-term stability in EU neighbouring countries.

The **Network for Innovation in Career Guidance and Counselling in Europe** **NICE** is an open network of higher education institutions and individuals from more than 40 countries, most of whom represent more than 50 training programs for career practitioners across Europe, and are engaged in the academic training of career practitioners. The network was initially funded by the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme as an academic network from 2009-2015; today, NICE is organised through the NICE Foundation. Each year, the network organises the NICE Academies conference to facilitate peer-learning and the sharing of expertise between people engaged in the academic training of career practitioners, and career professionals across Europe. Goals of the network are to promote excellence and innovation in academic, research-based training of career practitioners in Europe; support the coordination of academic training in CGC within Europe and foster cooperation between the academic community and relevant stakeholders. The network published the following [publications](#) that are important information resources for guidance practitioners.

The **International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance** **IAEVG** provides global leadership in and advocates for guidance by promoting ethical, socially just, and best practices throughout the world so that career, educational and vocational guidance and counselling is available to all citizens from competent and qualified practitioners through services offered face to face or through digital communication technologies. Its goals are to promote ethical, socially just and best practice career, educational and vocational guidance; advocate for career, educational and vocational guidance and counselling; communicate with members and stakeholders.

IAEVG developed **International Competencies for Educational and Vocational Guidance Practitioners**. The purpose of the IAEVG Competency Framework is to make explicit the competencies required in order for educational and vocational guidance practitioners to deliver quality services to clients. The competencies were developed on the basis of an international survey conducted in 2003 and revised in 2018. Recognising the wide variation across countries in professional training for, and the roles and functions carried out by educational and vocational guidance practitioners, the IAEVG Competency Framework serves as a resource for practitioners, policy makers and course providers while respecting their context specific needs and circumstances and their autonomy in developing and implementing their own frameworks. The IAEVG Competency Framework comprises **Core Competencies and Specialised Competencies**. The Core Competencies are the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required by educational

and vocational guidance practitioners regardless of their work setting or specialization. The Specialised Competencies recognise the diverse nature of educational and vocational guidance work in relation to the client groups, work settings, and training of practitioners and reflect competencies that may be required by some, but not all, educational and vocational guidance practitioners.

New **IAEVG guidelines** were published in 2025.

The IAEVG Ethical Guidelines support members in their professional practice with the people they serve and work with. IAEVG members agree to the conscious and intentional application of ethical standards of conduct in practice.

The Guidelines provide a reference for:

- making ethical decisions and actions as individual practitioners,
- planning organisational policies and services,
- informing the public of expected standards of professional practice and behaviour,
- providing evaluative criteria for self-assessments, peer evaluation, and supervision to ensure quality standards in service provision, and
- seeking organisational support for professional development.

The Ethical Guidelines identify minimal goals for ethical behaviour and may stimulate IAEVG members' professional development. The IAEVG is an international association, so the guidelines cannot address every possible ethical dilemma that IAEVG members experience in their national or cultural contexts. Members are thus encouraged to use the guidelines to inform the creation of ethical guidelines in their professional associations and in their local and national contexts.

The Ethical Guidelines are structured in six broad sections outlined below, specifically:

- 1) Ethical responsibilities to clients
- 2) Ethical responsibilities to colleagues and professional associates
- 3) Ethical responsibilities towards government, employers, community agencies, and community members
- 4) Ethical responsibilities to theory and research
- 5) Ethical responsibilities on the use of digital technologies (including AI)
- 6) Ethical responsibilities to professional learning and development

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- Fair Labour Mobility in the EU (ongoing). <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/labour-mobility/>
- PES Network Reports (2017):
 - *Career Guidance and Lifelong Learning: Summary Report* <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/216e1de3-f684-11e7-b8f5-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-75397133>
 - *Practitioner's Toolkit for PES* <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c9033aa1-f683-11e7-b8f5-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-75397133>
- IAEVG 2019 Conference – Book of Abstracts: *Career Guidance for Inclusive Society*. https://iaevgconference2019.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Book-of-abstracts_final-ISBN.pdf
- Journal of International Mobility (ongoing). <https://www.cairn-int.info/journal-of-international-mobility.htm>
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Checklist 1: Establishing the counselling relationship

Reflection points for guidance practitioners

- **Self-assessment:**
 - What is my current level of knowledge regarding intercultural interactions?
 - How do I react and what stereotypes do I hold when faced with 'the other'?
 - Do I need additional training or professional development to enhance my competencies?
- **Ethical reflection:**
 - Am I adhering to the ethical standards outlined in the IAEVG Ethical Guidelines?
 - What quality indicators from external evaluations should I consider to improve my guidance services?
- **Referral:**
 - Do my skills and competences meet the client's needs, or should I refer them to another specialist?

Key considerations for clients

- **Self-assessment:**
 - Has the client assessed their personal attitudes towards cultural interactions?
 - Has the client identified their reactions and stereotypes when dealing with 'others'?
- **Engagement:**
 - Is the client actively involved and open to participating in the guidance process?
 - How can the client foster a stronger relationship with the guidance practitioner?

Checklist 2: Analysis of individual development plan

Reflection points for guidance practitioners

- **Professional development and training:**
 - Have I utilised my training and professional development opportunities?
 - Do I have access to the latest scientific literature and relevant online resources?
 - Have I reflected on my personal mobility experiences to understand my ethnocentrism?
 - How do I integrate my daily intercultural experiences into my guidance practice?
- **Intercultural guidance practice:**
 - Have I engaged in group work with other professionals to simulate intercultural guidance scenarios?
 - Have I participated in recent training and guided practice sessions in intercultural guidance?
 - Am I sharing and promoting positive experiences from my professional colleague?
- **Evaluation and analysis:**
 - Have I evaluated and analysed the root causes of any mistakes to improve my future practice?
 - Have I assisted the client in identifying their personal and professional goals, specific needs, and expectations from the mobility experience?
 - Have I analysed the client's interests, strengths, and areas for development?
- **Parental involvement:**
 - Have I assessed the level of parental support and addressed any concerns or fears?
 - Have I provided guidance on how parents can best support their child throughout the mobility experience?

Key considerations for clients

- **Goal setting and needs analysis:**
 - Has the client identified personal and professional goals, specific needs, and expectations from the mobility experience?
 - Has the client reflected on interests, strengths, and areas for development?
- **Practical and intercultural preparedness:**
 - Has the client implemented practical aspects of daily life related to mobility, such as transport and accommodation?
 - Has the client reflected on the consequences of prior intercultural contacts, including language, non-verbal communication, and immersion in different groups?
 - Has the client contextualised previous personal experiences related to intercultural interactions?
 - Has the client identified stereotypical representations and judgments in intercultural situations?

- Has the client recognised individual reactions in intercultural situations, such as defensiveness, isolation, acceptance, adaptation, integration, and the transition from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism?
- **Parental involvement:**
 - Has the client engaged with parents to understand their level of support and address any concerns?
 - Has the client discussed with parents how they can best support the mobility experience?

Checklist 3: Mobility plan support

Reflection points for guidance practitioners

- **Program selection and alignment:**
 - Have I tailored my support to the client's individual needs and aspirations?
 - Have I helped the client choose the right programme based on their goals, duration, choice of country, funding opportunities, and individual needs?
 - Have I provided information on mobility programmes and assessed their alignment with the client's personal and professional goals?
 - Have I conducted a resource analysis to ensure the client has all necessary information for their mobility programme?
- **Support and strategy development:**
 - Have I developed strategies to help the client reduce anxiety and stress?
 - Have I utilised the benefits of culture and individual intercultural coping in these strategies?
 - Have I worked with the client to compile essential information and develop an individual strategy to overcome intercultural problems?
 - Have I included financial planning (budgeting, scholarship opportunities, financial management tips) and sustainability considerations (eco-friendly travel options) in the strategy development?
- **Communication and information:**
 - Have I established a reliable communication system for follow-up and emergency situations?
 - Have I provided the client with essential information to reduce anxiety and stress during mobility?
 - Have I highlighted the benefits of cultural contact that can facilitate the client's mobility experience?
- **Stereotype analysis:**
 - Have I analysed and reflected on my personal stereotypes about mobility and intercultural experiences?
 - Have I ensured that both the practitioner and the client are aware of their personal subjectivity in relation to intercultural experiences?
- **Parent counselling:**
 - Have I addressed frequently asked questions from parents and provided guidance on how they can best support their child throughout the mobility experience?
 - Are they aware of their personal subjectivity in relation to intercultural experiences?

Key considerations for clients

- **Program selection and alignment:**
 - Has the client worked with the guidance practitioner to choose the right mobility programme based on their personal and professional goals, duration, choice of country, funding opportunities, and individual needs?
 - Has the client conducted a resource analysis to ensure all necessary information for the mobility programme is gathered?
- **Strategy development and information management:**
 - Has the client developed an individual intercultural coping strategy?
 - Has the client kept track of essential information to reduce anxiety and stress during mobility?
 - Has the client gathered information about personally relevant points of cultural contact?
 - Has the client included financial planning (budgeting, scholarship opportunities, financial management tips) and sustainability considerations (eco-friendly travel options) in their strategy development?
- **Stereotype analysis:**
 - Has the client analysed and reflected on their personal stereotypes concerning mobility and intercultural experiences?
- **Parent counselling:**
 - Has the client engaged with parents to address their questions and understand how they can best support the mobility experience?

Checklist 4: Concluding the preparatory phase before mobility

Reflection points for guidance practitioners

- **Administrative preparation:**
 - Have I ensured the client has all necessary documents (passport, visa, health and insurance regulations)?
 - Have I helped the client understand the administrative requirements?
- **Practical organisation:**
 - Have I assisted the client in searching for suitable accommodation?
 - Have I helped the client understand the local housing market?
 - Have I ensured the client has all essential information to reduce anxiety and stress during mobility?
- **Financial planning and funding opportunities:**
 - Have I reviewed funding opportunities with the client?
 - Have I ensured the client has a clear understanding of financial resources available?
 - Have I assisted with financial planning, including budgeting, scholarship opportunities, and financial management tips?
- **Coping skills and cultural preparation:**
 - Have I presented and discussed coping skills with the client?
 - Have I ensured the client understands how to manage challenges during mobility?
 - Have I provided resources and support for cultural preparation?
 - Have I assisted the client in reviewing all necessary chronological stages of mobility?

Key considerations for clients

- **Administrative preparation:**
 - Has the client gathered all necessary documents (passport, visa, health and insurance regulations)?
 - Does the client understand the administrative requirements?
- **Practical organisation:**
 - Has the client searched for suitable accommodation?
 - Does the client understand the local housing market?

- Has the client kept track of essential information to reduce anxiety and stress during mobility?
- **Financial planning and funding opportunities:**
 - Has the client reviewed funding opportunities?
 - Does the client have a clear understanding of financial resources available?
 - Has the client worked on financial planning, including budgeting, scholarship opportunities, and financial management tips?
- **Coping skills and cultural preparation:**
 - Has the client understood and practised coping skills presented by the guidance practitioner?
 - Is the client prepared to manage challenges during mobility?
 - Has the client engaged in cultural preparation?
 - Has the client reviewed all necessary chronological stages of mobility?

Checklist 5: Monitoring during mobility

Reflection points for guidance practitioners

- **Support and monitoring:**
 - Have I offered support and monitored beneficiaries during the adaptation period, crisis, transitions, or other situations in the intercultural context?
 - Have I helped the client develop a feeling of belonging in the new environment through networking and community building?
 - Have I provided tips, support, and referrals to facilitate this process?
 - Have I maintained a database of mobility guidance clients?
 - Have I ensured effective communication channels are established and maintained?
- **Preparation for return and self-evaluation:**
 - Have I assisted the client in preparing for the return phase towards the end of mobility?
 - Have I reassessed the knowledge and skills needed for mobility guidance activities?
 - Have I evaluated the competencies and aptitudes necessary for effective mobility guidance?

Key considerations for clients

- **Intercultural immersion and belonging:**
 - Has the client positioned themselves in the intercultural immersion situation and found their 'new' position in relation to 'the other'?
 - Has the client participated in group activities and engaged in networking and community-building activities to develop a feeling of belonging?
 - Has the client utilised tips, support, and referrals provided by the guidance practitioner?
- **Reframing stereotypes and coping strategies:**
 - Has the client reframed representations and stereotypes of 'the other'?
 - Has the client developed an individual intercultural coping strategy?
 - Has the client maintained effective communication with the guidance practitioner or mentor?
- **Preparation for return:**
 - Has the client prepared for the return phase towards the end of mobility?
 - Has the client contacted the guidance practitioner or mentor if needed for assistance or guidance during adaptation, crisis, transitions, or other situations in the intercultural context?

Checklist 6: Evaluation and utilising the experiences after mobility

Reflection points for guidance practitioners

- **Follow-up and reintegration support:**

- Have I provided follow-up support after mobility?
- Have I assisted clients in identifying key competencies gained?
- Have I provided resources and support for job searches, networking, and leveraging the mobility experience in job applications and interviews?
- Have I connected clients with networks, alumni associations, and other opportunities to stay engaged with international communities?

- **Dissemination and validation:**

- Have I disseminated the experience and valorised the learning achieved?
- Have I shared good practices and published studies or articles in professional journals?
- Have I assisted clients in the validation and recognition of their learning and competencies gained during mobility?

- **Reflection and continuous improvement:**

- Have I reflected on and provided feedback into the initial stage of the mobility process?
- Have I critically analysed and conveyed the mobility process to stakeholders?
- Have I ensured a cycle of continuous improvement?

Key considerations for clients

- **Reflection and valorisation:**

- Has the client analysed the mobility experience and valorised the learning achieved?
- Has the client identified key competencies gained during mobility?
- Has the client integrated the intercultural experience into personal life and the home environment?

- **Sharing and reintegration:**

- Has the client shared the mobility experience with other potential beneficiaries?
- Has the client engaged in social, cultural, and professional reintegration in the home country?
- Has the client utilised the mobility experience in job searches, networking, and leveraging the experience in job applications and interviews?



- Has the client joined networks, alumni associations, and other connection opportunities to stay engaged with international communities?
- **Validation and recognition:**
 - Has the client sought validation and recognition of the learning and competencies gained during mobility?



