



The consultation feedback on the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning confirmed the crucial role that information, guidance and counselling plays in confronting the challenges and risks Europe is facing in the future. In this process it is necessary to raise web-based guidance towards higher levels of functionality within a sound framework based on ethics and quality.

This conference report is a contribution to an ongoing debate on how to ensure quality and ethics in web-based guidance.





Quality and Ethics in Web-based Guidance

Report from the International Conference
Gothenburg, Sweden, 25-27 June 2001



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Report from the International conference on Quality and Ethics in Web-based Guidance – Gothenburg, Sweden, 25–27 June 2001.

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Foreword

Since the conference on Ethics and Web Guidance in June 2001, the European Commission has presented the consultation feedback it received on the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning. In a Communication on Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality, this revealed the enormity of the challenges and risks ahead. It stressed the importance of knowledge and competences to deal with the consequences of globalisation, demographic change, digital technology and environmental damage.

It also confirmed the crucial role that information, guidance and counselling plays both in facilitating access to learning and in motivating potential learners.

Web-based guidance and counselling will come to play a key role in the future Europe. Accordingly the Commission has announced the launching of the European portal – an Internet portal by 2002 to provide comprehensive and reliable information for all citizens.

The conference focused on quality and ethics in web-based guidance. It drew together some important conclusions.

Firstly, the conference underlined the necessity of developing guidance services towards higher functionality. Quality and ethics should be the guiding principles to be applied when dealing with the numerous aspects involved in developing these services.

Secondly, maintaining quality and ethics in web-based guidance is a necessary function of a system with multiple participants. Such a system involves a number of participants including funding agents, policy makers, developers, practitioners, users, researchers and evaluators. For this reason an ongoing dialogue between those who plan and carry out research and design, and implement the services will be of crucial importance.

This conference was part of the Swedish Presidency and of the consultation process on the Memorandum on Life Long Learning, launched by the European Commission. For Sweden hosting the conference has been a constructive and rewarding experience and our thanks go to all who helped to make it an undoubted success. It is our hope, however, that this conference report will not only help promote the ongoing debate of ensuring quality and ethics in web-based guidance, but through transformation into concrete implementation, it will serve as a vital building block. And create a genuine European dimension where current and future generations of citizens in Europe can make informed choices in promoting their lifelong learning. A Call for Action!

Boo Sjögren
Director General

Lifelong Learning in a Career Guidance Perspective

Mr Boo Sjögren

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, dear guests and friends. It gives me great pleasure to greet you welcome to this conference assembling representatives from almost all Member States and candidate countries as well as from Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. I am gratified to note the presence of the representative of the European Commission, Ms. Laura Cassio.

Allow me also to address a special welcome to Mr. Mats Ekholm, Director-General at the National Agency for Education, and to convey our gratitude to Mr Tony Watts from NICEC, UK and Mr Jim Sampson, Professor and Co-Director of the Centre for the Study of Technology in Counselling and Career Development in Florida State University.

This is the fifth European conference on Information and Communications Technology in guidance. The European Commission played a key role in initiating the conference through its representatives Ms Laura Cassio and Mr Carlo Scatoli. The European Commission is also, among other organizations represented here today, co-sponsoring the conference.

But it needs to be stressed that the conference is above all part of the consultation process, launched by the European Commission on the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning.

The objectives of Lifelong Learning are Active citizenship, Social inclusion, Employability and Personal fulfilment. These objectives are also most relevant for web-based guidance. Key message 5 in the Memorandum is Rethinking guidance and counselling to ensure that everyone can easily access good quality information and advice about learning opportunities throughout Europe and throughout their lives.

Today we need rethinking on how to build a new system for career guidance where the focus will be shifted from supply to demand and where a person's needs are placed in the centre. ICT and Internet-based sources of information and diagnostic tools open up new horizons for improving the range and the quality of guidance and counselling services. They can enrich and extend the role of professionals, but clearly cannot replace it – and the new technologies bring new potential problems to resolve. One of these concerns quality and ethics in web-based guidance which will necessitate that guidance and counselling practitioners develop high-level capacities for information management and analysis.

The proceedings and the recommendations of the Conference in Dublin show that there is a keen and ongoing debate on the role of ICT in guidance. This debate has continued as well as development on the technological side. Today you can find many websites related to guidance, more or less serious, on the Internet. As a consequence, securing quality and ethics in web-based career guidance will be one of the most important issues in the future.

The theme of the conference, Quality and Ethics in web-based guidance, is certainly a challenging one. It is a common truth that the spread of information technology is one of the most significant features of the new millennium. Today, access to lifelong career guidance is a necessity for all citizens. With e-learning and distance learning, education and training is available on the Internet. This is also going to be the situation for career guidance.

In Sweden, The Committee on Guidance in the Swedish Schools System recently presented to the Swedish government its final report with proposals for a new system on career guidance in Sweden to strengthen access to neutral and independent guidance. An important issue is, of course, ICT and web-based guidance. We will later on hear about that from Mr Gösta Mårtensson, representative from the committee.

The International Programme Office handles a wide range of international programmes covering education and training, competence development and placement programmes abroad. Its main objective is to further the internationalisation of education and training in Sweden, thus contributing to international understanding and promoting Swedish competence at home and abroad.

Some of this relates to Community programmes already well-known to you, such as Leonardo, Socrates, Cedefop, Europass, Tempus as well as the co-operation programmes EU-Canada, EU-USA, Alfa and Med-Campus.

However, we are also responsible for many other programmes, which do not fall within the Community fold. Among these I wish to mention, especially, Linnaeus-Palme, which is a recently started exchange programme for teachers and students at undergraduate level in higher education between Swedish universities and those in certain developing countries. The programme is financed by Sida, the Swedish International Development Agency, and administered by us. In the field of higher education we are also responsible for IAESTE, an international exchange programme for students of technology and natural sciences.

In the area of training and employment we manage the Interpraktik scholarships, a programme providing unemployed people aged 20 to 30 years with opportunities to take part in placement programmes abroad. The objective is to raise their international competence and strengthen their position on the labour market.

Finally, with regard to secondary and upper secondary education, we administer NORDPLUS-junior providing pupils and teachers in the upper secondary school with opportunities for visiting schools in the other Nordic countries. We also manage certain programmes offering upper secondary school pupils opportunities for studying French, Spanish or German in these countries, these are known as A study year in France, Spain and Germany respectively, as well as various grants and scholarships for the internationalisation of schools, pre-schools and childcare.

Two weeks ago, here in Gothenburg, the European Summit marked the end of the Swedish EU Presidency. It has been a time full of challenges, surprises, opportunities, some negative elements but above all inspiring international co-operation for the International Programme Office as well.

As I am sure you are aware, the Swedish Presidency has defined three priorities which, in English, may be summarised as the three “E:s”: Enlargement, Employment and Environment. For my part, I would have liked to see a fourth “E”, standing for Education. However, I am happy to note that many important steps have also been taken within this field.

During the Presidency The International Programme Office is responsible for three major international conferences. A common feature of these events is their focus on issues of mobility, lifelong learning, and employment. All candidate countries have been invited to them.

The first conference dealt with the theme of Lifelong Learning and Social Dialogue. It was organised jointly with the European Training Foundation and aimed at bringing candidate countries into the consultation process on the Commission’s Memorandum on Lifelong Learning.

Another conference, called From Individual Development to Employability, was held with the support of the Commission four weeks ago. It addressed the issue of mobility.

And now we will host the third European conference, starting today, on Information and Communications Technology

in Guidance to discuss Quality and Ethics in Web-based Guidance. Also, as I mentioned earlier, this event forms part of the consultation process on the Commission's Memorandum on lifelong Learning.

Since this is the fifth European Conference on Information and Communication Technology in Guidance, it also aims to follow up the conclusions of the fourth conference in Dublin 1996. The objective of the conference is to take a further step forward by working out a concrete draft for recommendations on ethics and quality in web-based guidance as a foundation for policymaking. The outcome of the conference will be the last piece in the consultation process and added to the documentation report on Lifelong Learning from Sweden.

At this meeting various aspects of the whole spectrum of quality and ethics in web-based guidance will be discussed in a pragmatic and knowledgeable way. We all stand to gain from listening to each other and from exchanging experiences of good – and bad – practices.

We have said that this is a working conference primarily because it will lead to a concrete report with recommendations in the field of web-based guidance. Let me conclude by wishing you inspiring deliberations, a successful outcome to your meeting, and, last but not least, some free time to enjoy the early summer in Gothenburg when it is at its best.

Mr Boo Sjögren

Director-General, International Programme Office
for Education and Training, Sweden

Some reflections from the Swedish Presidency

Ms Kerstin Thoursie

THIS IS THE FINAL week of the Swedish presidency of the European Union.

It has been the first time for us – with a lot of work, experience and lot of joy. And with a constructive and pleasant cooperation with the Commission.

In spring last year the meeting of the European Council in Lisbon resulted in a widespread agreement on a strategy for economic growth and full employment in the EU. In this agreement educational and research issues obtained a role in EU-collaboration in a quite new way. This has – of course – impressed the work during the Swedish presidency.

Within the educational field we had five meetings with ministers and several conferences with experts. Many of these conferences were arranged by national agencies – like this one on web-based guidance – arranged by the International Programme Office.

I would like to make a brief summary from the meetings with the ministers of education and I will concentrate upon issues relevant for guidance.

In February the ministers agreed on concrete future objectives for the educational systems. These objectives will guide the continued discussion on education at European level during the next ten years. In the report, which was submitted to the Stockholm summit in March it was established that initiatives must be taken to increase accessibility to information and communication technology to Europe's schools and to improve access to higher education. The report of the Education Council was the first of its kind and will be followed by annual reports to the European Council.

In May the ministers of education adopted a recommendation on mobility of students and teachers in the union. This recommendation means that MS shall undertake measures to recognise education and training and practice from other MS,

to facilitate mobility by financial study assistance to encourage studies in several languages and to facilitate the spread of information of studies and practice

The ministers of education also met informally three times – “informally” means no decisions, no resolutions but open discussions.

The first one was in February when the ministers of education and the ministers of research held a joint meeting in Uppsala. An important topic of their discussions was how education and research can contribute to full employment in Europe according to the goals established in Lisbon in the spring 2000. Another topic was the demographic trends in Europe and the challenges for educational policy. The ministers also discussed the common difficulties to recruit students to science and technology programmes in Europe.

In May the ministers of education from about 30 countries met in Prague to follow up the so called Bologna Declaration. This Declaration aims at the continued development of the European cooperation within higher education with its main focus on promoting the mobility of students between the different educational systems and labour markets in Europe. The Swedish minister, Thomas Östros was the chairman of the meeting and he stressed the importance of in-

creased influence from students in creating higher education.

And finally – on Thursday, Friday and Saturday this week, the last three days of the Swedish presidency – a third informal meeting will take place in Riga. It is a joint arrangement between the Commission, Latvia and the presidency. Both MS and candidate countries will be there. The heading is “e-learn for life” and the meeting is expected to focus on the challenges facing education systems by information society development and on the use of ICT as a tool to enhance and widen the opportunities for life long learning.

I think this summary clearly shows that guidance is a most essential topic. Most of the educational work during the Swedish presidency presume lifelong guidance available for all. Guidance is really a main thred!

And the next presidency – the Belgian – has announced guidance – or “orientation” – as the central theme of a seminar soon in July.

Thus – there are reasons for all of us – to take part in this important conference with high expectations and excellent contributions.

Thank you for your attention!

Ms Kerstin Thoursie

Director, Swedish Ministry of Education and Science,
Sweden

Guidance for Lifelong Learning in an IT-world

Mr Kenneth Herder

THE THEME OF THIS CONFERENCE IS "Quality and Ethics in Web-based Guidance".

I'm director of the public Employment Service in the county of Västra Götaland. The Employment service is responsible for the national labour market policy in this county. We are about 1 500 officers in the organisation and have 62 offices in 49 municipalities in the county. In my speech I will present the employment service especially the Web-services. My thoughts about Quality and Ethics are of course from a labour market policy perspective. I will look upon this will labour market policy eyes.

What is then labour market policy. It is a central tool in order to reach the government's overarching scope regarding growth, stability and fair distribution. The employment and competence strategy is the basis for the labour market policy. Active measures will have priority in front of passive cash support. It means among other things that persons who have difficulties in obtaining and keeping a job will, in the first place, be offered education or other competence measures in order to increase the possibility to obtain an employment. It is particularly important that long term enrolees and long-term unemployed persons will take part of the ongoing rise in the labour market.

During 2001 the labour market measures shall focus on an effective job-brokering in order to counteract inflationary bottlenecks, and measures – particularly within the framework of the Activity Guarantee programme – for groups of persons who have special difficulties to obtain a job. The gender-segregated labour market shall be counteracted and

the diversity in the Swedish labour market will be better taken in advantage. An important task is to create conditions for a continued conjunctural rise by increasing the labour force.

The overarching objective for the labour market policy is a well-functioning labour market with full employment and good economic This fiscal year the employment service have three objectives:

1. Limiting job vacancy times
2. Prevent bottlenecks by vocational employment training
3. Counteracting long periods without regular employment

When we in the labour market administration talk about Quality and Ethics in our operations then we have to think about these objectives. When the Employment Service is working with services to jobseekers it is obvious that there are a lot of decisions to be made about the future. One of the most important is to choose what to do in the future. There are many different questions to be decided, questions which can be difficult to answer: What do I want to work with? What am I interested in? What do I want to get out of my work? What can I work with? What are my personal aptitudes?

I'm sure that there will be a growing demand for guidance in the future. There are an increasing number of changes that will influence the work life. There are today two major trends that can be summarized in two words: Glo-

bal and Digital or IT. These two trends has already affected all parts of the society and I think that we only have seen the beginning of it.

What are the changes that we have to consider when we talk about the today's work-life and the future. I will give some examples:

There has been rapid structural development in private and public sector. The changes are both local and global. If you want to stay in business then you have to run the best operations in our trade of business. In the future this will be more and more a reality to both the private and public sectors.

The working people will be exposed to increasing demands for e.g. flexibility in order to be employable. In the same time as demand will increase it will be harder to describe certain demands in a specific occupation. The requirement depends of the individual employers choice.

A growing number of new occupations has been and will be developed. New and different requirements will be put on labour force. Old occupations will change dramatically. Employability is today a well known word. It is important for everyone to gain that kind of competence that at least one employer is looking for.

A growing number of alternatives for education will make it harder to know which education will be the best for me.

If I try to summarize this there will be an indefinite number of opportunities and it is more difficult to make a choice, the right choice.

Because of the rapid changes everyone have to develop its competence during the whole working life. You cant be sure that your employer will provide you with the accurate possibilities to develop your skills. If you should be employable during 40 years you have to take a lot of responsibility for your own personal growth and development

What is the role for the public employment service in this

In some countries, placement, counselling and labour market policy programmes are divided between different institutions. Swedish labour market policy, however, is characterised by all resources being available within one and the same organisation nation-wide – the Public Employment Service. It is a One-stop shop

With activities thus co-ordinated, Employment Service customers – employers and jobseekers alike – can turn to one and the same agency for help. Resources are co-ordinated and their optimum utilisation made easier.

We try to make our service more effective. Therefore we today say that self-service is standard service and personal service is extended-service. The aim is not to avoid personal service as an end in itself. We try to use just as little resources as possible in every situation.

When a jobseeker is visiting an Employment office the he first calls at the customer reception. This has an information desk where the customer can obtain the answers to basic questions, enrolls a jobseeker with the Employment office (using a self-enrolment form) and make an appointment for an interview with a placement officer or a vocational counsellor.

A dedicated section of the customer reception is equipped with various aids to self-service, comprising both printed and computer-assisted information. Information is extensively based on self-service, whereby those customers who are willing and able to do so can themselves track down information about job vacancies, occupations, training opportunities and financial benefits in connection with education, unemployment etc.

Even at the Employment Office placement activities are extensively based on the self-service principle. With a customer workstation with in-built computers, customers can

access the Labour Market Administration's comprehensive data banks on the Internet described above.

In the case of customers requiring recurrent personal contact with a certain placement officer, placement activities are specialised in such a way that often there are specialists in branches, trades, occupations etc. within the local labour market to turn to. The intention is for the individual member of the Employment office staff to have a deeper knowledge of subsidiary labour markets – which are growing more and more specialised – and in this way to be able to serve job-seekers and employers more adequately.

Jobseekers can also obtain more comprehensive, in-depth information about job content and various vocational training opportunities from specialised employment office staff, i.e. vocational counsellors.

Self-Services inside the employment services

What are the possibilities inside the self-service. It is divided in services available at the office itself and services on the Internet. In our Website www.ams.se there are a lot of different services.

The Job bank is the most frequently used service. Through the Job Bank, jobseekers can access all job vacancies reported to the Employment Service. He or she can search by municipality or occupation, or else construct one – or several - personal search profile. You can use this for guidance. If you match your personal profile with different occupations then you will see what is missing in your competence profile.

The Job Bank is updated every day. It contains tens of thousands of job opportunities throughout Sweden. It also offers links to the web-sites of the employment services in Europe and North America.

In the Jobseeker Bank a jobseeker presents his (or her) qualifications by means of occupational nomenclature and search words. For example, there are searchable words for education, skills and knowledge of languages.

Some of the services on the Web is especially designed for guidance. Today there are the following services.

In 1999, two new databases were introduced on the Internet, "Occupational A to Z" and "Educations in Sweden". The aim of these two services is to provide information and guidance when choosing an occupational direction and/or a suitable educational program. In the spring of 2000 we also introduced an interest profile with hints on occupations worth considering.

The "Occupational A to Z" contains descriptions of 500 occupations, showing – duties, - training alternatives, – employment prospects and – rates of pay. A list of closely related occupations is also included.

"Educations in Sweden" contains up-dated information on more than 3 500 education programmes and training courses all over Sweden, as well as information on different ways of financing studies. During August 2000 "Occupational A to Z" had 50,000 visitors and "Educations in Sweden" over 30.000.

Inside our Internet-services there is an Interest test. By answering questions about activities or about duties in various occupations, the user obtains an interest profile which also includes hints on occupations worth considering. Visitors can compile their own interest profile after replying to 60 questions, but they also have the option of going on with the test by answering further questions. The test contains 120 questions altogether.

There is a very rapid development of new services in the Web. we are now developing an Interactive jobseeker program and counselling site. At the moment we are developing an on-line jobseeker program and counselling site where, up to a certain level, jobseekers will be able to get their

bearings in a situation of vocational choice and on-line support in their job-seeking. This program will be interactive, and through the dialogue the user will gain access to various testing tools, vocational and educational information, labour market information and job search programs. The new site will be built up successively during the year 2000

What about Quality and Ethics

What about Quality and Ethics. I am working in the Public Employment Service in this beautiful county. As I said in the beginning an employment officer looks upon quality from a labour market policy view. The client who visits the employment service wants to have a job. Sometimes the client already has a job and wants a new one but the most common situation is that the client is out of work. The guidance in the employment service will therefore mostly be directed to find the shortest way between the present situation and a new job. This way can be real short but it can also be very long. Some persons do have to change occupation and start a brand new career. Then there can be a education and training period for some years before a new employer is found.

Guidance is important for the growth in the society from both an economical point of view and an individual point of view. The human resources are vital for the economic growth. There will be no new employment if there aren't an employable person and an employer looking for labour. Trained labour is a crucial factor for the development in every region. For the individual person it is vital to find a job because the job is the base for a good life. It gives the everyone a possibility to develop and enjoy life.

Life long learning is vital for continuous development and change in the region. From this point of view it is important that the society develops instruments and tools for guidance. In the Swedish employment service we have developed some tools in our customer stations. These tools are

web-based and can be used by everyone, those who are clients at the employments service and everyone else.

In our region we have developed some additional tools: Infoteket.se is a web-site that is directed to help person in the county of Västra Götalands with information about work and education. This site contains more than 6 000 links to different sites on the Internet. Out of these more than 2 600 are about different branches and 1 300 about education. This site is a cooperation between the Municipality of Gothenburg and the County Employment Service of Västra Götaland.

Why do we have a local site for guidance? We think it is vital for the development in this region that people living here will have accurate information about Work and Education.

The goal has been to develop an environment that stimulates activity

A local web-site offers structured information and describes how you should work with guidance and career-planning.

It makes the guidance independent of time and space. You can use it anytime and anywhere. It reaches everyone in the county.

For officers in the employment service and the schools it is a tool in the guidance work

For the commercial life and the public sector it offers a possibility to show what job opportunities there are and what opportunities for career development there are in the county.

These things are what we can call Quality factors for Web-based guidance.

In this county we also have started some projects for the future: Virtual Employment Service is one office which is only available on the Internet. When you visit this office then you can sit at home or any place where you have a connection to the Internet. We have also been working with a Job Club on the Net. The experiences from this is very good.

The clients are satisfied and they get a job in the same extent as in ordinary Job-clubs. Jobseekers from all over the county has been taking part of the same group.

Concluding remarks:

When we talk about guidance it is important for us to look both on the demand side and the supply side. It means that we shall give accurate information about possible occupations but also about the future for these occupations.

When we carry out our labour market mission we have some specific objectives to take in consideration. This means that we only support with different measures that occupation in which there is a demand on the market.

If there is quality in our guidance the client will have a new job and the growth in the society will be better.

The Web is democratic, which means that it is available for everyone, everywhere. But it is also like looking for an needle in a hay stack. It's hard to find the information you need and the proper information and the amount of information you are able to handle. Therefore is it important that we can complete the Web-services with personal service. Many clients needs help to sort among all available information and find the proper information.

It is important to use the possibilities that the new information technology will offer. But it is important to be aware of the obstacles. All persons don't know how to use the Web by birth. We have a lot of responsibility to train people how to work with the Web. This is most important for them who are middle aged.

When someone uses our services on the Web we cant see what happens. The market is transparent but not the results. We can register a visit to the web-site but we are unable to see what will happen afterwards. I think it is important to develop and strengthen research about Web-services in order to know more about how the services affect the future for individuals.

In this global world I think it is important to increase do-

operation about guidance within European Union. The commission have developed an Employment Strategy which is called Investing in people. I think this is the most important challenge for the European Union today.

Mr Kenneth Herder

Director, County Labour Board of Västra
Götaland, Sweden

Introduction

I AM HONOURED to be addressing this Fifth European Conference on Information and Communications Technology in Guidance. I was involved in all four of the preceding conferences: as a keynote presenter at the first one at Brussels, Belgium, in November 1985 (Watts, 1986); as organiser of the second one at Cambridge, England, in June 1989, where we also had a teleconference with a simultaneous conference in the USA (Watts, 1989); as a keynote presenter at the third one at Nürnberg, Germany, in November 1992 (Watts, 1993); and as rapporteur at the fourth one at Dublin, Ireland, in December 1996 (NCGE, 1997). Each has been an autonomous event, but with a sense of continuity which has significantly enhanced their quality and impact. One of the recommendations of the Dublin conference was that a fifth conference should be held in 2000, to review progress on the other Dublin recommendations and to consider the implications of further developments in information and communications technologies and their use. We are a few months late, but I am delighted that this fifth conference is taking place. European networking in this field has already been enormously influential, and it is crucial that we maintain its momentum in this new millennium.

My task in this opening session is to remind us of the Dublin recommendations, and to review the progress that have been made in implementing them, as a basis for our discussions here. I also want to make some comments on the role of technically mediated service delivery in the career guidance field, placing this in the context of changing patterns

of service delivery in other sectors. I will pay particular attention to two issues which received limited attention at our previous conferences: the role of telephone help lines; and the role of careers services' own websites. I will try to link all of this to some of the five themes that have been selected as the framework for our debates.

Progress since Dublin

Many of the recommendations at the Dublin conference related to guidance in general rather than to ICT in particular. On some, there has been little or no action. The National Resource Centres remain in being, but their role has not been significantly strengthened. The "experts group" on guidance that existed under the PETRA programme, providing a focal point for sharing good practice and identifying areas for collaborative action, has not been reconstituted. No legislative instrument has been developed to outline common principles for provision and good practice across the European Union. At Member-State level, only a few countries have yet established a national guidance forum, bringing together the key relevant social partners to develop co-ordinated strategies for delivery of lifelong access to guidance and to draw up national quality standards for all sectors of guidance provision.

In short, progress on policy matters has been slow. In recent years there has been much creative collaboration across countries within Europe, encouraged by Leonardo and other action programmes. But we have lacked clear

focal points within the European Union to harness the learning from these collaborative projects and relate them to policy and wider practice. Much the same has been true within countries: provision tends to be strongly sector-based, and most countries have lacked a focal point for bringing together policy and practice into a lifelong continuum.

Now, however, there are encouraging signs of change. The recent Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (CEC, 2000) includes “rethinking guidance and counselling” as one of its six “key messages”, with the objective of ensuring “that everyone can easily access good quality information and advice about learning opportunities throughout Europe and throughout their lives”. It envisages guidance as a continuously available service for all, which “overcomes the distinction between educational, vocational and personal guidance” and “reaches out to new publics”. It insists “that systems of provision must shift from a supply-side to a demand-side approach, placing users’ needs and demands at the centre of concern”. It recognises that more services are now market-based, but affirms that “it remains the responsibility of the public sector to set agreed minimum quality standards and to define entitlements”. On ICT, it comments that “ICT/Internet-based sources of information and diagnostic tools open up new horizons for improving the range and the quality of guidance and counselling services”. It declares that “they can enrich and extend the professional role, but clearly cannot replace it”. Nonetheless, it poses the question: “how can further impetus be given to the development of Internet-based tools for self-guidance?”

This is one of a number of “questions for debate” posed in the Memorandum; another is whether quality guidelines might be developed through co-operation at European level. A consultation process is now under way, seeking responses from Member-States as well as from the countries of the European Economic Area and the pre-accession countries, by the end of September; consultations are also taking place at European level. The aim is to prepare an action plan for

lifelong learning by the end of 2001 which will specify policy objectives, concrete initiatives and benchmarks, and may also generate ideas for defining priorities and directions within the Community programmes and instruments (ibid).

Encouraging links are being established between this European work and a new programme within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), on policies for career information, guidance and counselling services. This is related to OECD’s concern for making a reality of lifelong learning for all. At least 11 OECD countries are taking part – most of them from Europe but also including Australia and Korea. One of the questions being addressed is: “What is an appropriate balance between different information and guidance models and delivery systems (classroom-based career education; one-to-one counselling; group counselling; telephone advisory services; computer-based advice and information; community-based services) for young people and for adults?” The report of the programme will be published in mid-2003 (Sweet, 2001).

Through these two activities, it seems that there are exciting possibilities over the next couple of years for a significant raising of the profile of guidance services internationally. There are also moves afoot, following two very successful symposia held in Canada in 1999 (Hiebert & Bezanson, 2000) and earlier this year, to set up a new ongoing forum for public policy in career development. In these various ways, the opportunity seems to be there for significant advances in European and wider international collaboration over the next few years. This provides a very positive context for our debates at this conference, particularly if we can come up with some challenging analyses and recommendations which can be fed into these wider ongoing initiatives.

Part of these debates should focus on some of the other more general recommendations from the Dublin conference, asking what progress we have made in relation to them, whether or not they still represent our views, and what

needs to be done next. Reading through the recommendations, it is evident that there were two key underlying concerns: first, to identify the role of government and of guidance professional bodies in relation to the free market represented by the Internet; and second, to identify the role of ICT in relation to face-to-face guidance services.

On the first of these, the Dublin conference declared unequivocally that “governments and guidance professional bodies need to be proactive in ensuring that the Internet is used effectively for guidance purposes”. There was an implicit recognition that the Internet already contained a myriad of resources for supporting career development, that this was likely to continue to grow at a rapid rate, but that such unregulated growth would not necessarily meet the needs of all clients or of the public interest. Accordingly, governments and professional bodies should have a continued responsibility for issues related both to access and to quality. This would include support for schools to help pupils make effective use of ICT for guidance purposes throughout their lives; ensuring that provision was customised to the distinctive needs of particular groups, and that those without access to ICT were not disadvantaged; and developing quality standards for guidance in general and for ICT in particular. In all of these cases, the Internet was a significant if not the exclusive focus of concern.

On the second issue, the conference affirmed that “ICT represents additional tools for use in guidance, not substitutes for the role of guidance counsellors”. It recognised, however, that “ICT potentially alters the role of guidance counsellors”. Training programmes should include “training for using ICT in one-to-one and group settings, and for new roles as managers of guidance resources”. There should also be “more evaluation studies ... in the public domain on the use of ICT in guidance in terms both of its processes and of its outcomes”.

One of the difficulties in reviewing progress on these matters is that no up-to-date analytical overviews are avail-

able on the development either of guidance services in general or of ICT-based services in particular across Europe. The invaluable software reviews produced by Marcus Offer for the Nürnberg and Dublin conferences (Offer, 1993; 1997) have not been repeated (though the national mapping reviews prepared for this conference provide a useful stop-gap). Neither have the reviews of guidance services as a whole which I and other colleagues produced for the Commission in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Watts et al., 1988; 1994), building upon a regular series of earlier reports arising from a Commission decision in 1966 to publish a regular report on “the function of vocational guidance, its progress and experience gained” (O J No. 154, 24/8/66). One of the recommendations I would like to see from this event is on the importance of such studies, extended to cover not just the existing but also the aspirant Member-States.

In the absence of documented evidence, we will have to share our impressions, including those recorded in the responses to the questionnaire issued in advance of the conference. My own impression is that we have made some progress on the issues we identified in Dublin, but that it has been patchy and fragmented, reflecting the patchy and fragmented nature of the field as a whole. Moreover, the technology keeps moving ahead of us, requiring us to reframe the issues we need to address. It is to this that I now want to turn.

Transformations in service delivery

In the course of the five European conferences, the focus of our attention has shifted. In the first three, the main focus was on computer-aided guidance systems: packages, usually produced at national level by commercial providers or publicly-funded projects, for guidance services to make available to their clients. In the Dublin conference, the main focus was on the Internet, but again the main concern was with national or even international websites, and how –

by comparison with traditional computer-aided guidance systems – these could be available to end-users much more immediately and accessibly. Now, however, we are moving into the digital era, in which the hitherto separate “analogue streams” of the computer, the television and the telephone are merging into an integrated “digital river” (Cunningham & Fröschl, 1999). This means that we need to consider a wider range of technologies in a more integrated way. It also means that we need to pay more attention to the way in which guidance services – in whatever setting they occur – can view these technologies not only as externally provided resources (or, indeed, competition) but also as direct delivery vehicles for their own services.

The growth of technically mediated service delivery in the career guidance field is linked to the transformations which are taking place in service delivery in other sectors. These sectoral transformations are infectious, because they shape the wider expectations of consumers. Increasingly, consumers want a service to be available when they identify a need for it, with minimum delay and minimum effort: they want it here and they want it now. This does not mean that they are unwilling to undertake visits to dedicated physical locations where this offers added value, either through face-to-face interaction or through access to physical resources (e.g., in the case of shopping, being able to see and touch particular goods). But their “decision rules” in these respects are becoming more and more discriminating.

A strong example of a sector which has transformed its service delivery is banking. Traditional banks have increasingly been replaced by automated cash machines and by use of telephone and web-based services for accessing bank statements, moving money between accounts, and other transactions. The result has been a reduction in the number of “bricks and mortar” high-street banks. Similar transformations are taking place in other business sectors, as part of seeking a “channel advantage”, based on maximising the distinctive strengths of different sales channels (Friedman

& Furey, 1999). Another example in the public-service sector is the health service, where help lines and web-based services are increasingly being used so that individuals can diagnose their own symptoms and, where appropriate, take immediate remedial action, so reducing the demand on hard-pressed surgeries and hospitals. In all of these cases, the technically mediated services have not replaced the face-to-face services, but have reshaped them and/or recast their role. In all services, a crucial issue now is how to get the right mix of “bricks” and “clicks” (Gulati & Garino, 2000).

Accordingly, guidance services need to consider how to redesign the ways in which they deliver services to their clients. I want to examine two particular facets of this: first, the strategic use they make of their own websites; and second, the use they make of help lines.

Websites as strategic instruments

The Internet is providing both new options and new forms of competition to most if not all organisations. Slevin (2000) argues that organisations should view engagement with the Internet as part of a positive engagement with risk. This needs to go beyond an organisational presence or viewing web pages as containers of information about the organisation, to viewing them as “new kinds of time-space organising devices” (p.133). In this respect, websites must be understood as “reflexive projects which are intricately involved in what organizations are making of themselves” (p.137).

For guidance services, their own websites are of particular significance because they sit at the interface between, on the one hand, their face-to-face services and the physical resources within their centres, and on the other, the web-based services which provide a rich seam of supplementary resources but could alternatively be seen in some cases (e.g. Monster.com) as offering significant sources of competition. Many of these web-based services, as noted earlier, are

national or international in nature. Through their websites, guidance services can act as information brokers, identifying the “global” resources they wish to utilise (some through simple technical links but others requiring commercial or non-commercial partnership arrangements), and then relating them to their own “local” provision. In this way, they can powerfully combine “high tech” with “high touch”.

Offer & Sampson (1999) suggest that guidance services’ websites can have at least five different purposes. One is as a funnel into their own existing off-line services, aiming to maximise take-up of these services. The second is the reverse of this: to act as a diversion, seeking to take the pressure away from these off-line services by diverting users to other, usually web-based resources where their needs can be met. The third is an enhancement of such diversion, seeking to deliver on-line guidance within the site itself. The final two add further enhancements: providing a forum for putting users in contact with others facing similar issues to their own, or with people who may offer help in relation to these issues (e.g. potential career mentors); and providing a source of distance learning programmes in career management skills and related areas.

Most of these purposes are not, of course, mutually exclusive, but the choice and balance between them require strategic decisions to be made, as do the choice of partners for any partnership arrangements. Not only this, but the process of making such decisions can be a valuable opportunity to review the strategic development of the service as a whole (cf. Sampson & Watts, 1992) – which is what I understand Slevin as meaning when he referred to websites as “reflexive projects”. Many services clearly start by simply establishing a presence on the Internet: as Marcus Offer (1998) puts it, “we’re here, because we’re here, because we’re here”. Thereafter, it seems likely that they go through four developmental stages. The first is promotional: promoting what the service offers off-line. The second is adaptive: delivering some of these services in on-line form. The serv-

ice is innovative: delivering new services on-line which are not possible, or less feasible, off-line – which is where any partnership arrangements may come into play. The fourth is synergistic: to intertwine on-line and off-line services in new ways. The further a guidance service moves through these stages, I suggest, the more likely it is to be using its website as an agent of change in relation to its service provision as a whole.

Help lines

Websites are a relatively new form of service delivery. The telephone is much older: it was invented by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876, so it is hardly “new technology”. But recent years has seen a massive growth of help lines and call centres in many fields: so much so that call centres are now one of the fastest-growing employment sectors, accounting for an estimated 3% of the UK’s working population by 2005 (Data monitor, 2000). There seem to be at least three explanations: the much more extensive availability of telephones, now significantly enhanced by the massive growth of mobile phones; the more sophisticated support technology now available for, for example, routing calls, diverting them into a set of precoded voice response systems, and providing database support for call centre staff; and cultural change, linked in particular to the growth of consumerism and the trend to a “24-hour society” in which work and other activities are not confined to specified hours.

In the UK, the Government launched in February 1998 a help line now known as “Learn direct” which is, as far as I know, the largest telephone help line in the career guidance field to have been developed so far in the world. By the end of 2000 it had responded to 2.4 million calls. It operates from two large call centres in Leicester and Manchester, each with 110 “seats”, plus smaller centres in Northern

Ireland, Scotland and Wales. All use a single telephone number. The help line is open from 9.00am to 9.00pm Monday to Friday and from 9.00am to noon on Saturday. The staffing structure is based on a distinction between three levels of advisers: information advisers dealing with straightforward “information” requests; Learning Advisers dealing with enquires requiring “advice”; and Lifelong Learning Advisers dealing with enquiries requiring “advice and guidance”. The service does not claim to offer access to full in-depth “guidance”. The argument that this is not feasible is refuted by examples of successful practice in career and other forms of counselling by telephone elsewhere. The decision appears to be based more on the perceived need to control the staffing and other costs of the help line (Watts & Dent, 2001).

The development of the Learn direct help line has demonstrated the potential of the telephone for delivering personalised career information and advice on a massive scale. Telephone guidance sits somewhere between face-to-face guidance and web-based guidance: it combines the synchronous interactivity of face-to-face work with the “at a distance” accessibility of web-based work. Its potential has been under utilised in many countries to date. The example of Learn direct shows what can be achieved.

Some interesting contrasts can be drawn between the Learn direct help line and more limited help lines in other countries, including Canada and New Zealand. Some have been promoted essentially as information services; others as career counselling services. Some are focused primarily on learning or on work; others on career, embracing the two. Some are aimed at young people or adults; others are all-age. Some are separate services based on call centres; others are integrated in various ways into more broadly-based services (ibid).

Two points about this are relevant for our discussion here. The first is that the decisions made about the framing of help lines in these various respects are critical. Included in this is the extent to which the service should be offered at

national or at local level. With Learn direct, the original idea was that calls should be routed to help lines based as locally as possible. This is the model used, for example, by the UK National Health Service help line NHS Direct: calls are routed to local call centres, and are only passed elsewhere when lines are busy. Part of the rationale is the notion that, in time, it might become the “gateway” to all local health services (McLennan, 1999). In the case of Learn direct, by contrast, the help line is offered largely at a national level. This can result in some loss of quality: an area of concern identified in a “mystery caller” evaluation was “lack of local knowledge, including broad understanding of geography and detailed understanding of local learning and guidance provision, networks and referral agencies, and transport” (Bysshe & Parsons, 1999, p.18). Against this needs to be set the consistency of service and of adviser training offered by relatively large-scale operation. Such decisions have a significant influence on the balance between “global” and “local” dimensions in guidance provision. This in turn is critical in determining the level of integration that is possible with face-to-face services.

The second point relates to technological synergy. Whereas the Learn direct help line was originally conceived as a separate service, a Learn direct website has now also been introduced, and increasing attention is being focused on integration between the two. The website includes not only courses and occupations databases, but also a diagnostic package which provides an assessment of skills, interests and values, and connects the results to occupational families. Each page of the website includes a “call me” button which generates a telephone call from a Learn direct adviser. In principle, it should be possible in future for the adviser to bring up on their screen the caller’s work to date – a draft curriculum vitae, for example – and work on it with them. Conversely, more callers could be encouraged to access the website and be supported in doing so. Again, greater use of e-mail should make it possible to sustain

contact over a period of time through a mixture of synchronous (telephone) and asynchronous (e-mail) communications.

Implications

The concept of flexible usage of the telephone, website and e-mail, linked with face-to-face facilities, opens up new opportunities for the delivery of career information and guidance. It means that individuals can initially access help in the form which is convenient to them and with which they feel comfortable. Some feel comfortable visiting a careers centre; some do not. Some are more comfortable on the telephone, or on e-mail; some are not. A further dimension will be added to this by the likely move towards ready domestic access to videophones or interactive digital television. However, all of these could be regarded not as alternative services but as portals into a wide, flexible and well-harmonised network of services which can enrich the learning pathways available to the individual. Within such networks we need clearer models, based on users' experiences, regarding the use of the different media, and ways in which they can be effectively combined, in order to provide a stronger basis for planning coherent service delivery.

A key issue in relation to such models is the significant attached to the relationship between the individual and the counsellor. The model could be based on a co-ordinated range of resources, of which the counsellor is seen as one. Or it could place the relationship with the counsellor at the centre, viewing other resources as supports to this relationship. In the latter case, it needs to be recognised that the relationship can now be sustained in a variety of ways: not only face-to-face but also at a distance; and in relation to the latter, both through synchronised communications like the videophone, the telephone and Internet "chat", and also through asynchronous communications like e-mail and voice-mail.

The rationale for the relationship model is that career

decisions have an important cognitive component, but that they are bound up very closely with people's feelings about themselves, their sense of identity, and their dreams and aspirations. Accordingly, the individual can best be helped by working with another individual who provides a reflection of their humanity and has the skills to enable them to confront their own distinctive identity (Watts, 1996). This is an honourable tradition within the career guidance field, but it has come under attack on two linked grounds: that by placing the relationship at the centre, it cedes too much power to the counsellor; and that because it is so labour-intensive and counsellors are costly, it is not practicable or sustainable as an extensively delivered model. This leaves the alternative view that guidance professionals should see themselves primarily not as counsellors but as managers of guidance resources: managing diverse resources in ways which enable individuals to find the means through which their personal needs can best be met (*ibid*).

The debate between these two models needs, I think, to be at the heart of our discussions here. ICT tends to be viewed as leaning towards the resource-based model. But it does not necessarily require jettisoning the relationship model. Indeed, there is a risk that in contrasting the two models too starkly, we may implicitly hold frozen the familiar and established practice of the one-to-one interview. As Tait (1999) has pointed out, we need to understand how technology is now transforming the ways in which human relationships are pursued and managed. Instead of assuming that crucial elements are lost when relationships are mediated by technologies, we need to look at how technology is enabling such relationships to be sustained in ways which are released from the constraints of space, time and physical presence.

All of this has major implications for staffing structures within guidance services, and for initial and in-service training. Website development, for example, can be del-

egated to a technical specialist, or can be viewed as an activity to which all staff should actively contribute. There is a strong argument for a mixture of both approaches: for recruitment of technical specialists to extend the skill-mix within services, but also for ensuring through recruitment requirements and in-service training that all staff are web-literate and have an appropriate level of technical competence. Again, if help lines are to be a significant form of service delivery, this raises the issue of whether they should be staffed by dedicated and specially trained staff, or whether all staff should be given training in telephone work, where – for example – the lack of visual cues makes extra demands on listening skills.

Conclusion

Constantly lurking beneath our anxieties about the use of ICT in guidance has been our fear of reductionism: that the use of technology will lead to simplistic, “quick fix” approaches. The fear is not groundless: there are many examples of policy-makers being tempted by notions that technology will make it possible to reduce the cost of guidance services through replacing labour-intensive counselling services. But the more densely our models of delivery interweave our human and technological resources, the more chance there is of genuine synergy between the two, leading not to reductions but to increases in the quality – as well as the quantity – of delivery.

In the past, we have tended to conceive of the different models of service delivery – face-to-face, by computer, by telephone, and so on – as being alternative means to the same ends. The notion has been, therefore, that we should evaluate their merits in relative cost-effectiveness terms. I am suggesting that this is the wrong model. All the interesting questions in this area now, I believe, are about how we combine the models in a synergistic way, so that they add

value to one another, and provide new options for clients.

In my paper to the Brussels conference back in 1985, I suggested that we can see ICT in three ways: as a tool, as an alternative, or as an agent of change (Watts, 1986). Subsequently, at Nürnberg and beyond, we discussed the relative merits of “mini” systems which carry out specific guidance functions, and “maxi” systems which aim to cover as many as possible of these functions and to facilitate smooth cross-pathing between them (Watts, 1993; Jackson, 1993). As a broad generalisation, it seems that “mini” systems which model only a limited part of the guidance process tend to be regarded either as tools, supplementing the various other tools used in guidance programmes; whereas “maxi” systems which model most of the process are more likely to be regarded either as an alternative or as an agent of change (Watts, 1996). The emergence of organisations like Monster.com could be seen as opening up new opportunities for ICT to be viewed as an alternative, replacing existing guidance services. On the other hand, the wider emergence of websites and help lines as forms of technically mediated service delivery means that the potential of ICT as an agent of change is now far greater than we had previously imagined. If we are to ensure that the “alternative” scenario is avoided, it is crucial that this potential be fully harnessed.

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Quality and Ethics in Web-based Guidance – Coping with Change and Stability

Mr Jim Sampson

SINCE THE FIRST CONFERENCE on the design and use of information and communications technology (ICT) in guidance in 1985, much has changed, while much has also stayed the same. While there has been continuous and rapid change in the technology used to deliver guidance applications, the needs of individuals in transition to assess themselves, generate options, and learn about their options has remained constant. The recent improved access to the Internet made possible by the World Wide Web is a key evolutionary development in the application of ICT in guidance. The Web provides individuals in their places of residence and work unprecedented access to career assessments and information. We are now struggling with how to make appropriate use of this new technology to meet existing needs.

Two key factors in making appropriate use of the Web in guidance involve maintaining the quality in the resources and services we offer to the public while also maintaining our ethics. Quality refers to the demonstrated achievement of standards adopted by our profession for the creation of resources and the delivery of services. Quality is not static, as it changes over time with improvements in the state-of-the-art of practice as reflected in professional standards. Ethics are principles that guide the behaviour of developers and practitioners that help to ensure that no harm occurs to the people they serve as a result of their actions or their failure to act. Statements of ethical behaviour, embodied in professional standards, are also not static, but change as a result of professional association actions.

For the purposes of this paper, Web-based guidance applications can be categorized as “stand-alone” or “integrated.” “Stand-alone” Web-based guidance applications typically offer a single guidance function. Examples include assessment, information, resume/CV preparation, or job banking. “Integrated” Web-based guidance applications combine two or more guidance functions, making it easy to share data among applications. An example would be a career information delivery system (CIDS). A CIDS “delivers integrated assessment and search functions linked to career and educational information in an environment that provides user support” (ACSCI, 1999, p. ii). Related ways of describing computer-based guidance applications are as mini and maxi systems (Watts, 1996), with stand-alone applications similar to mini systems and integrated applications similar to maxi systems.

Participants in Web-Based Guidance

It is easy to jump to the conclusion that developers are responsible for maintaining the quality of their applications and practitioners are responsible for maintaining ethics in the services they deliver. A more careful analysis, however, reveals that maintaining quality and ethics is a function of a system with multiple participants. Web-based career guidance involves several participants including funding agents, policy makers, developers, practitioners, users, and researchers and evaluators. Funding agents include appointed

or elected officials who allocate resources to meet identified public needs and capitalists who invest private resources to meet public needs while returning a profit. Policy makers include government officials and members of professional associations who establish and maintain standards of practice in guidance. Developers include individuals or organizations who create and maintain Web or PC-based career guidance applications. Practitioners include individuals who by their training and experience are qualified to deliver guidance services, including counselling. Users include individuals who use Web-based guidance applications on a self-help basis and clients who use Web-based guidance applications with the support of a practitioner as one component of a larger guidance process. Researchers and evaluators include individuals who examine the impact of Web-based guidance applications on individuals and organizations in a variety of settings.

Participants' Potential Contributions to Quality Web-Based Guidance

Each of the participants in Web-based guidance can contribute to the delivery of quality resources and services. Each of the subsequent sections explores recommendations for enhancing resource and service quality.

Funding Agents

Funding agents provide entrepreneurial funding with a goal of self-sufficiency or profit, or provide funding with a goal of maintaining public access to resources seen as supporting a public good. Key potential contributions to quality that can be made by funding agents include providing adequate funding, providing systematic funding, and funding innovation.

Provide adequate funding that allows developers to meet professional standards

Funding agents have the task of allocating limited resources to projects that have the greatest likelihood of achieving self-sufficiency, profit, or service delivery goals. The problem is that in an effort to fund as many projects as possible, funding agents may under-fund a Web-based guidance application, making it impossible for developers to meet software development standards. It would be better to fund fewer projects that have a realistic chance of meeting professional standards, than to fund many projects (often in response to political pressure) that are doomed to mediocrity from the outset. It is also particularly important to provide funding for Web-based projects, given that there is a growing public perception that career assessments and information delivered on the Internet should be free of charge since most information available on the Internet is free. The problem is that Internet applications in the public domain are expensive to maintain, especially ongoing information development (Sampson, 1999a).

Provide systematic funding that allows attention to implementation

The emphasis in funding system development is often placed disproportionately on the creation of software. Too little attention is paid to the implementation of software (Sampson, 1996). Funding for Web and PC-based system development should include the creation and field testing of implementation resources, e.g., software-specific guides to the implementation process, classroom exercises to use in career education programs. Public-sector funding for organizations to use Web-based applications should include funds for implementation (staff time for planning the inte-

gration of the software with existing resources and services, staff training costs, and evaluation costs) as well as funds to obtain access to the software. Funding could be made contingent on approval of an organization-specific implementation plan that meets relevant professional standards. Public-sector funding should also include funding for delivering the counselling and guidance services necessary to support individuals who need assistance in order to benefit from using the application (Offer & Sampson, 1999; Sampson, 1999a; Watts, 1997). Funding for counselling may be based on the assumption that individuals vary in their readiness for career decision making and require varying levels of counselling support to make effective use of a computer application (Offer & Sampson, 1999; Sampson, 1999a). As part of the support provided for system use, Watts (1996) noted that individuals should have free access to a screening of user needs and a national help line for questions that may result from system use.

Provide funding for innovation in the use of ICT in guidance

The use of ICT in guidance was once itself an innovation. If room had not been made among existing funding priorities of the time, ICT in guidance would not exist today. A portion of ongoing guidance funding needs to be reserved for innovations. Examples include developing software for special populations, such as women returning to work and persons with limited literacy and numeracy (Sampson et al., 1990; Watts, 1996).

Policy Makers

Policy regarding the design and use of ICT in guidance has been formulated through the development of professional

standards. Over time, standards have been viewed as a key element in promoting quality in ICT guidance applications (Offer, 1992; Offer & Sampson, 1999a; Sampson, 1992; Watts, 1996; Weimer, 1992). A series of standards have emerged that reflect the missions of the organizations creating the standards. Taken together, the standards systematically address factors that contribute to quality, including the career development of individuals, the development of software, service delivery practice, and the training of practitioners.

Develop and refine standards for the career development of individuals

The foundation of all standards for ICT guidance applications deals with expected guidance outcomes related to the career development of individuals. These standards are often created by governments and deal with outcomes such as self awareness, the awareness of potentially appropriate career options, and the awareness of the decision-making process (e.g., Kobylarz, 1996). These standards also often articulate the need to assist specific individuals with specific transitions, such as the transition adolescents make from secondary to postsecondary education and training. By developing and refining these foundational standards, a context is provided for the development of software and the delivery of services.

Develop and refine software standards

Standards for the development of ICT in guidance have been adopted by professional associations in guidance (e.g., ACSCI, 1999; NCDA, 1997a). The creation and use of software development standards is particularly important with respect to the Internet.

The lower costs of delivering software on the Internet, as opposed to the PC, has encouraged many new developers to create Web sites that deliver career assessments and information. Most of these Web sites provide no data on the quality of the assessments or the information delivered on the sites. For example, Oliver and Zack (1999) noted the questionable validity of career assessments available on the Internet. Also, on many sites it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the qualifications of the site developer (Sampson, Kolodinsky, & Greeno, 1997). Without appropriate software development standards, it is impossible to hold developers accountable for the software they create. Care does need to be taken, however, to develop standards that are economically realistic. Standards that are too high may restrict development, while standards that are too low will have no impact. It is better to have balanced standards that can strive toward increased quality over time. It is also important to involve developers and practitioners to help ensure that standards balance idealism and realism. Finally, it is important to examine if standards are actually contributing to improved system design and use.

Develop and refine standards of practice

Standards for the delivery of career guidance and counseling that include ICT have been adopted by professional associations (e.g., ACA, 1999; APA, 1997; NBCC, 1997; NCDA, 1997b). Quality software used badly in practice can result in poor guidance outcomes. Standards of practice can help practitioners know how to make best use of the software they have available. For example, these standards can contribute to quality use by indicating the circumstances

when the intervention of a counsellor is necessary (Offer & Sampson, 1999). Standards of practice can also help developers in creating suggested implementation strategies for their software.

Develop and refine standards for practitioner training

Standards for the training of counsellors related to the Internet have been adopted (e.g., ACES, 1999). Quality software, used with a well-developed service delivery process, will still result in poor guidance outcomes if the counsellor that is providing counselling support is inadequately trained. In addition to the generic counsellor competencies included in the ACES (1998) standards, counsellor training should include exposure to standards for career development, software development, and counselling practice. Pre-service and in-service counsellor training provides an opportunity to integrate all standards into practice.

Developers

Developers create Web-based guidance applications that are: a) sold on a per use basis (such as interest assessments), b) licensed to organizations for a fee (such as computer-assisted career guidance systems), or c) provided free of charge to individuals and employers (such as job banking and talent banking software). Software development involves balancing the need to be distinctive and innovative on one hand with the need to provide features commonly available on similar applications and to meet applicable professional standards.

Use standards of practice created by policy makers in developing Web-based guidance applications

The current quality of Web-based guidance applications varies greatly. While some examples of quality development do exist, problems have been noted in the validity of information and assessments as well as problems in the quality of links provided on Web sites (Offer & Sampson, 1999). One solution is to incorporate professional standards into the software development process. By using standards early in the development process, developers can estimate the relative costs of meeting each standard and then establish priorities for which standards can be cost-effectively met. It may be necessary to create a long-term plan for standards compliance, with each succeeding version of the software more fully meeting standards. Developers' use of standards has the additional benefit of providing potentially valuable feedback to policy makers regarding the utility of standards in practice.

Document the adherence to professional standards to aid users and practitioners in selecting applications

It has long been recommended that developers improve the documentation of the validity of their system content (Offer, 1992; Sampson, 1992; Sampson et al., 1990). One of two reasons exists for the current lack of documentation. The first reason is that little care has been taken with regard to establishing the validity of the assessments and information delivered on a Web site. Little care in development has been taken because: a) the developer was untrained and unaware that validity was important, b) so little time and funds were available for software development that stand-

ards adherence was never considered, and c) the developer knows that documented validity is important, but that so few users are likely to complain that the problem is not worth any attention. The second reason for limited availability of validity documentation is that the developer is concerned about validity, has validity data available, but has never taken the time to document his or her work due to the ongoing pressure to meet product delivery schedules. One potential solution is for funding agents to require validity documentation as part of the accountability required for full receipt of funds. Another solution is to train practitioners not to purchase or use Web-based guidance applications that do not have validity documentation.

Create practitioner-training resources as an element of system development

It has also long been recognized that practitioner training is a key element of success in using ICT in guidance (Sampson, 1992; Sampson et al., 1990; Watts, 1996). Developers should create training resources as part of the overall development process. As software changes, training resources should be revised as appropriate. Training content should include both training on the applications as well as training on the implementation of the application (Sampson, et al., 1990). Best practices can be encouraged by disseminating information on effective use of systems (Sampson, 1992). Developer Web sites provide a readily accessible resource for remote delivery of training documents and presentations. Moderated practitioner listservs can give developers an additional training opportunity while also providing valuable feedback on software performance. For examples of comprehensive, non-software specific practitioner training resources for ICT in guidance see Offer (2000) and Hunt (2001).

Practitioners

Practitioners provide support that individuals need to make effective use of Web-based guidance applications. While some practitioners are counsellors who provide counselling, other guidance practitioners, such as teachers and human resource development staff, provide helpful guidance support to individuals using Web-based applications.

Recommend Web-based guidance applications that are appropriate for user needs

The overwhelming number of Web-based guidance applications available makes it difficult for users to select an application that best meets their needs. Practitioners can use their knowledge of Web sites and their expertise in judging the needs of users to recommend Web sites that are appropriate. The motivation for users to complete Web-based guidance applications can be enhanced when a collaborative working relationship exists between the practitioner and the user.

Provide counselling and guidance for those individuals who need support to make effective use of applications

Some individuals have a high level of decision-making readiness that enables them to benefit from self-help use of Web-based guidance applications, while other individuals have a low level of decision-making readiness and will require practitioner support in order to benefit from the application (Offer & Sampson, 1999; Sampson, 1999a, Sampson, Peterson, Reardon, & Lenz, 2000). A three step counselling process including screening, orientation, and follow-up

(Sampson, 1997) can be used to provide an appropriate level of support. The development of an effective helping relationship is crucial to the success of this model. Another opportunity to provide counselling support occurs at the “teachable moment” when users can access telephone or videoconference-based counselling support to answer questions while they are using a Web-based guidance application (Offer & Sampson, 1999; Sampson, 1999a). This “resource rich” form of counselling allows the practitioner to work with the user “in the moment” as learning occurs, rather than subsequently discussing an individual’s use of a guidance resource. This approach uses technology to optimise the human element in applying ICT in guidance.

Create organizational Web sites to facilitate practitioner-supported and self-help use of Web-based guidance applications

Another approach to help individuals locate Web-based guidance applications that meet their needs is for service delivery organizations to create Internet Web sites that incorporate the expertise of practitioners in helping individuals match needs with resources. Referred to as a “need-based” approach (Panke et al., 2001; Sampson, 1999b; Sampson et al., 2001), these sites provide an interactive dialog where users identify their needs from the options that are presented. After user needs are clarified, links are provided to resources that are judged by practitioners to meet the needs that are identified. This approach increases the likelihood that users will locate appropriate resources without being overwhelmed with choices. Viewing potential needs on the Web site may also help users to learn about other needs that they may have that can be addressed in the future.

Successfully implement Web-based guidance applications within their organization

Successful implementation of Web-based guidance resources within an organization is a key element contributing to the quality of the guidance resources available. Practitioners play an important role in guiding the implementation process. Seven steps are recommended for implementing ICT applications, such as Web-based guidance sites. The steps in the model include: program evaluation, software selection, software integration, staff training, trial use, operation, and evaluation (Sampson, 1996). When practitioners create their own guidance Web sites, the following seven steps for implementation are recommended: program evaluation, Web-site development, Web-site integration, staff training, trial use, operation, and evaluation (Sampson et al., 2001).

Users

The Web has provided individuals with unprecedented access to self-help guidance resources, both assessments and information. The Web has also provided clients with assessments and information that could be used as homework in counselling.

Select self-help Web-based guidance applications that have evidence of quality

For individuals using Web-based guidance applications on a self-help basis, there is a need for them to choose wisely from among the applications available. Individuals must bear some responsibility for the choices that they make in obtaining resources. It is not possible to screen individuals

from poor quality Web sites. While gateway sites with pre-selected Web sites help guide users toward quality sites, individuals can still unintentionally access poor quality sites. One solution is to promote consumer education through career education curricula in schools and higher education (Offer & Watts, 1997). This can help users become aware of potential problems and to subsequently differentiate valid from invalid Web-based assessments and information.

Follow-through with practitioner recommendations for selecting Web-based guidance applications

When clients willingly seek recommendations from practitioners referring them to quality Web sites as part of a guidance intervention, clients have an obligation to follow-through with the recommendations that have been given. The hypertext links on Web sites make it easy to “surf” the Web for those individuals who find it difficult to remain focused and complete Web-based guidance resources as recommended by a practitioner. Individuals have to be responsible for following through with Web-site homework collaboratively assigned as part of a guidance intervention.

Follow-through with the counselling support available for using Web-based guidance applications. For clients using Web-based guidance applications as part of a guidance intervention, there is an obligation for the client to follow-through with the services that have been offered. For example, when a client with low readiness for decision making makes a collaborative decision with a counsellor to engage in counselling along with using a Web site for homework, the client has the responsibility to follow-through with their commitment. A Web-based guidance application may be ineffective, not because the application lacked quality, but because the associated counselling intervention was not completed.

Researchers and Evaluators

Researchers and evaluators provide an essential feedback loop to help all participants understand the extent to which Web-based guidance applications are performing as designed. Both research into the general nature and impact of Web-based guidance applications and evaluations of the effectiveness of specific applications are important.

Provide policy makers, developers, and practitioners with feedback on the functioning of applications. An important element of quality in Web-based applications is the demonstration of system effectiveness in relation to standards adopted by our profession. “Evaluation is standards in action” (Offer & Sampson, 1999, p. 513). Without documentation, assertions of quality are meaningless. Recommendations for improved evaluation of ICT in guidance have been consistent over time (Offer, 1992; Sampson et al., 1990; Watts, 1996). Both research and evaluation can provide useful data for the improvement of the design and use of systems. User and practitioner surveys, focus groups of users and practitioners, participant observations, usage tracking, and outcome measures can provide data that leads to refinement of both the software and the strategies used for implementing the software. Clearinghouses of research and evaluation data (Offer, 1992; Sampson et al., 1990; Sampson, 1992; Watts, 1996) and developer Web sites offer opportunities for disseminating what has been learned.

Provide accountability for funds expended for Web-based guidance applications. Evaluation studies offer an additional benefit of demonstrating to funding agents that financial resources expended on the development and use of Web-based guidance applications have offered, or have not offered, an acceptable return on investment. As a result, funding agents can make more informed decisions about allocating scarce resources. With this knowledge, funding agents can also write improved specifications for system development and use, ultimately leading to improved quality of Web-based guidance applications.

Participants’ Potential Contributions to Quality Web-Based Guidance

Funding Agents

Provide adequate funding that allows developers to meet professional standards

Provide systematic funding that allows attention to implementation

Provide funding for innovation in the use of ICT in guidance

Policy Makers

Develop and refine standards for the career development of individuals

Develop and refine software standards

Develop and refine standards of practice

Develop and refine standards for practitioner training

Developers

Use standards of practice created by policy makers in developing Web-based guidance applications

Document the adherence to professional standards to aid users and practitioners in selecting applications

Create practitioner-training resources as an element of system development

Practitioners

Recommend Web-based guidance applications that are appropriate for user needs

Provide counselling and guidance for those individuals who need support to make effective use of applications

Create organizational Web sites to facilitate practitioner-supported and self-help use of Web-based guidance applications

Successfully implement Web-based guidance applications within their organization

Users

Select self-help Web-based guidance applications that have evidence of quality

Follow-through with practitioner recommendations for selecting Web-based guidance applications

Follow-through with the counselling support available for using Web-based guidance applications

Researchers and Evaluators

Provide policy makers, developers, and practitioners with feedback on the functioning of applications

Provide accountability for funds expended for Web-based guidance applications

Participants' Potential Contributions to Ethical Practice in Web-Based Guidance

A number of ethical issues are associated with the use of Web-based guidance resources. Invalid assessments and information appear to abound on the Internet and unsophisticated users may find it difficult to differentiate valid from invalid assessments and information. Confidentiality of data stored on remote servers may be compromised if care is not taken to restrict access to appropriate individuals. Without attention to appropriate safeguards, the data transmitted over the Internet may not be secure. Unqualified practitioners may provide Web-based career services. There may be a lack of practitioner intervention for low readiness individuals when guidance is needed. A lack of practitioner awareness of location-specific information may cause a remote practitioner to misunderstand client circumstances or fail to recognize important issues. Some individuals may have limited access to Internet-based resources and services due to limited financial resources. In some circumstances, there may be a lack of visual and auditory privacy for counselling in remote locations (Sampson, 2000; Sampson & Bloom, 2001; Sampson, Kolodinsky, & Greeno, 1997). Funding agents, policy makers, developers, practitioners, users, and researchers and evaluators can help resolve some of these issues.

Funding Agents

Funding agents can have an important impact on ethical issues by requiring that developers and practitioners address how relevant ethical issues are to be dealt with in the way software is developed, practitioners are trained, and guidance is delivered. For example, practitioners can show the plans for ensuring access to computer applications for marginalized young people and older adults who may have difficulty accessing resources (Watts, 1996).

Policy Makers

Policy makers need to ensure that software standards and standards of practice reflect relevant ethical issues. For example, standards for developers and practitioners can include principles for equality of access to Web-based guidance applications for persons with various disabilities.

Developers

Developers need to review professional standards to ensure that their designs do not create any ethical problems. System-specific practitioner training resources created by developers need to acknowledge how ethical problems related to service delivery can be minimized in practice. For example, confidentiality in the storage of user records needs to be incorporated into system designs as well as practitioner training.

Practitioners

Practitioners need to complete the ethics-related training that is offered by developers and then develop service delivery procedures that are intended to minimize ethical concerns. For example, in service delivery procedures completed by practitioners, attention needs to be paid to how low readiness clients are invited to receive the guidance interventions that they are likely to need. Practitioners also need to engage in supervisory processes that provide an opportunity to deal with the inevitable ethical issues that arise.

Users

Users need to function as informed consumers, understanding that they have a right to question practices that they deem to be unethical. Web-based guidance applications and guidance services need to have clear instructions on how users and clients can contact a responsible party to report anomalies and seek corrective action if needed. For example, users need to know how they can question system content that may appear to be invalid.

Researchers and Evaluators

Researchers and evaluators need to include ethics associated with system design and guidance practice as one of the content elements of their research and evaluations. For example, has the distance delivery of services, and the potential for limited auditory and visual privacy, resulted in the potential harm to users or a reduction of service delivery effectiveness?

Conclusion

The use of information and communication technology in career guidance is an ongoing mix of change and stability. Technology in Web-based guidance applications will always be changing, while fundamental human needs related to career development will likely be constant. The best way to cope with both technological change and ongoing needs is to take advantage of the synergy among the participants in Web-based guidance. No one participant should bear the responsibility for delivering quality guidance resources and services. Funding agents, policy makers, developers, practitioners, users, and researchers and evaluators each have a role to play. Working individually and working together, participants in Web-based guidance can achieve the synergy necessary to deliver quality resources and services in an ethically responsible manner.

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Mr Gösta Mårtensson

IN THE SWEDISH SCHOOL SYSTEM, the term “study and vocational guidance” embraces a number of related activities. These are: personal vocational counselling for groups and individuals, information about education and working life as part of normal class instruction, and various forms of contacts with working life. Personal guidance aims to help individuals both in selecting future courses of studies and in their choices of vocational orientation.

During the last 15 months the special the Governments investigator Mrs Ingegerd Sahström has worked together with Mrs Gunilla Hjorth from the Ministry of Education and Science and myself Gösta Mårtensson from the Labour Market Board in order to map out and analyse what individual students in the Swedish school system need in the way of study and vocational guidance, in the light of the changing demands made by working life, education and societal trend.

The result has recently been presented to the minister of Schools and adult education, Mrs Ingegerd Wärnersson in the two Swedish Official Reports “Career Guidance.se.nu, (SOU 2001:45) and Good Examples, (SOU 2001:46). The second one contains a summary of the final report and twelve different Good Examples showing how to co-operate and co-ordinate guidance and counselling at a local level.

The third report, “Current trends within skills development”, has been produced together with the committee on Individual competence account, (IKS) and the committee on Validity of adult education.

Today I will make a short presentation of the results and the proposals the committee has put forward. I am totally

aware of the local and Swedish touch. And even if some of the chapters are about international contacts and development, you naturally will find the report written from a Swedish point of view. However, I trust your capability and I am convinced that you easily will be able to compare with the situation and development of Career Guidance in your own country.

Headlines

The first chapter in the final report is about the background and the history of education and vocational guidance in Sweden. It is a rather short history. It all started in year 1906 when the Parliament paid attention to young people and their transition from school to working life. Since then the responsibility for the education and vocational orientation has been changed varied from time to time during the history between the local authorities and the national agency and between the school system and the employment offices.

In connection to the far-reaching School reforms a special experimental organisation of education and vocational guidance, SYO was introduced in 1972. The intention was to embrace different programme from society to help the individual to education, work and vocational decision. To choose occupation became something you should learn. SYO was the new and comprehensive term for personal vocational counselling, individually or in groups, information about education and working life and various forms of contacts with working life. A special occupation, educa-

tional and vocational counsellor, SYV was established in the local municipalities.

In chapter two we describe how the guidance and the counselling works and is organised today. And when using the word today we map up and describe the situation from year 1990.

I will not make any further comments on these two chapters more than that they give a full account of the development of educational and vocational guidance in Sweden.

One part of the final report describes the surrounding world and another part, that may be the most important part, is about the individual and the individual needs.

Finally, with the analysis and the map up as a background we describe possible ways for the Career Guidance in the future and make proposals among other things on a national co-ordination of Career Guidance and a national web-based ICT-system.

I will now give a deeper orientation about three main areas that have influenced on our work and proposals.

Current trends indicate a very clear and powerful change of direction in the society from institution and collectivism to individual and individual solutions. This displacement of perspective will have great influence on career guidance in the future and need a reconsideration of ethics, methods and techniques.

Focus is on client interests, customer needs and individual needs. It is interesting to notice that products and service such as self-service, e-service and e-learning are produced in co-operation with the clients and the customers. Right performed this interaction will guarantee a high level of quality standards.

During the last years in Sweden we have seen a wave of privatisation in many areas. Without valuing what has happened I notice that the wind of change will be powerful also in the field of career guidance and counselling.

Knowledge societies

There is a radical change of views in the society on qualification, education and knowledge. Direct connection between training and production is no longer obvious. Access to new tools and knowledge as well as the way of how to organise training create new possibilities. ICT and the Internet open opportunities in the learning sector.

Career Guidance

Current trend is that training increasingly is tailor-made from the view of individual needs. You do not choose complete training programmes any more. Instead you pick parts of a programme and put together your own training mix.

The committee suggests using the word and the expression “Career Guidance” instead of “educational and vocational guidance” in the future. We think that “Career Guidance” is more relevant and up to date. Career shall be understood as the individuals acquired qualifications and experiences from all kinds of training and work as well as other competence-related activities as society engagement and mandate in organisations etc.

In Sweden some people connect the word “karriär” with “climbing on shoulders to reach the top”. Career shall not be understood as that negative value.

We have also proposed a general definition of career guidance. When we analysed different organisations we noticed that very often they have double missions, which also reflected in their definition of education and vocational guidance. For instance the Labour Market Board has two customer groups, individuals and employers and the first mission is to mix the right person with the right job.

Even in school there could be a problem to know who and what will be the first objective especially when empty places in a class cost a lot.

Our definition is fully oriented towards the individual needs. Please be aware of the incomplete translation into English. It has taken a lot of time and discussions to get an agreement on the definition in Swedish. To translate it to another language will for certain create new discussions on every single word and what it stands for. Maybe this will serve as a reminder when we all try to come to an agreement on ethics and quality standards.

The definition of Career Guidance

Independent and neutral career guidance starts from the individual needs

Irrespective of age and occupation. The public career guidance shall offer the individual tools and methods to

Search for information and knowledge and orientate her/himself about training, practice and labour market

Identify and express her/his needs, interests and opportunities

Make a choice of relevant steps

Be able to take on responsibility for her/his own career process

See the opportunities to realise her/his ideas and provide for her/his needs

Career portfolio

The focus on individual needs, the free choice and personal responsibility makes frequent documentation of knowledge, experience, motivation and personal requirement important in view of lifelong learning.

In the report we describe the Portfolio model as a good

example of how the individual is able to follow efforts, development and the capability to provide capacity in reflexion. The method also realise a new role for the teacher who will work more as a personal coach instead of being a lecturer.

The Portfolio model could be an important tool in work with career guidance.

Proposals

The starting point for the committee is that a career guidance must be accessible to all, no matter how and who they are. This is also the found for the proposals.

Legislation

We found out that the counsellors works hard and have a lot to do. They often get feedback on good work from the individuals but more seldom from their employers.

The management level does not seem to know much about guidance and very few answered the question from the committee, saying, "How do you know that your counsellor is doing a good job"?

We propose an increased role for the municipalities in order to co-ordinate all public guidance and counselling within their areas.

A local platform

The committee also put forward a suggestion concerning the organisation of career guidance at a local level. As I said before we want the municipalities to take responsibility for the co-ordination and also for an action programme, which shall be revised once a year. It is also essential to create a local platform from where career guidance will be organised.

This platform should be independent and neutral in relationship to employers, working life and different training institutions.

Since the municipalities in Sweden have a rather high self-government the committee does not say how it should be done. The thought is to create this platform open to everybody who needs career service.

In a special report the committee point out twelve good examples on how local platforms can be organised.

National co-ordination

To meet the future needs of career guidance it is also essential to co-ordinate public career guidance at a national level. The committee propose establishing of a national centre for career guidance and counselling and suggest that a special workgroup will be put together to prepare for this centre. One of the most important tasks for the new centre will be to co-ordinate international career guidance. The questions this conference is discussing will be some of the tasks for a national centre to handle.

Training and research

It is important for the development of guidance and counselling that there also in the future will be an own separate vocational education. The committee proposes a revised university education on 140 points to be a guidance counsellor. This new education will also be useful in skills development and give access to basic and applied research.

Web-based ICT-system

It is obvious that the public sector has to co-ordinate their efforts and development of web-based career guidance in

the future. One of the problems today is that several public authorities develop their own portals and databases, but they are not able to “talk” to each other. The committee has proposed a developing of a national, common, user friendly and web-based ICT-system based on already existing databases. We are not talking about a portal anymore, rather more a communication system built on a soft infrastructure.

During the work in this committee we started a network with participants from the ICT-area. One of the most interesting solutions, upon which the proposals relay on, came from the National Agency for education. And since this is a web-conference I finally will take the opportunity to a deeper presentation of the suggested way to build a new web-based ICT-system for career guidance. These thoughts have also be presented in an expert-meeting in Brussels last December and last week we had a second discussion about this solution with Mr Theo Mensen in DG Employment. DG Education and DG Employment are together preparing for a European ICT-system for jobs and learning opportunities.

So finally I let the floor to Peter Karlberg from the National Agency of Education.

Mr Gösta Mårtensson

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Recommendations from the Working Groups

THE AIM OF THE CONFERENCE was to result in a proposal for concrete recommendations in the field of web-based guidance, as a foundation for policymaking, within the European Union. The frame of the conference was, due to that, a working conference. A special chairperson and a special reporter were pointed out for each working shop. The participants in the workshop were pointed out as 'experts' in guidance/web-based guidance in his/her country. The participants joined a specific workshop and followed it during the whole conference.

Structure of the workshops – four pillars

Four pillars had been set up to form the base for the discussions within five different themes. The pillars were:

1. Lifelong learning (The Memorandum and especially key message 5)

The policy aim across the European Union should be lifelong access to guidance in support of lifelong learning and lifelong career development for all. What are the consequences for quality and ethics on each theme?

2. The future development in the field of web-based guidance.

The future and not the situation of today should be the bases for recommendations on quality and ethics on each theme. What are required from the recommendations to meet the needs of the future?

3. Consumer's perspective.

All citizens should have access to the web based on their needs. All citizens should also have access to career tools to meet their needs. How can recommendations on quality and ethics be based on the consumer's perspective?

4. Networking as a common tool.

To meet the needs of the consumer's in a lifelong perspective, networking is a necessity. What demand does this put on the recommendations within each theme?

Five themes

Five different themes, each of them an aspect of web-based guidance, were set up. Based on the pillars given above five workshops produced recommendations for quality and ethics on each theme.

Interactive career tools and tests on the web

Workshop A

Chair: Peter Plant, Denmark: pepl@dpu.dk
Reporter: Heidi Viljamaa, Finland:
heidi.viljamaa@careerstorm.com

More and more test and self-assessment tools emerge on the Internet. Sometimes you find the ideas behind them, sometimes not. Sometimes there is a possibility to get respond/feedback from a counsellor, but often not. What are interactive career tools on the web? What are interactive career tools? Do we have the same vocabulary in this field? What are the consequences for the recommendations?

1. Theory needs to be explicit

We recommend that the theoretical framework of career tools is made explicit, so users can evaluate results against theory

More discussion needed on what type of theories are appropriate for the internet – new media, new practices

For example, tools designed for career experts may not be appropriate as such on the internet

2. Document what was done and how

We recommend that information about how the tool is constructed is made available (especially when user receives recommendations about career options)

For example, make explicit what the tool can do and what it cannot do

Clarify what the objectives of the tool are

3. Provide accurate information to the user

System developers should make realistic promises to the users on their site and in their promotional materials

System developers should inform the user who is responsible for the career tool, where the developers are located geographically and who is funding the career tool

user needs to be notified if tool is meant to be used with a counsellor

Signpost services for specific target groups are needed

4. Security and confidentiality

Data security needs to be taken into account

Identity and professional qualifications of service provider should be visible to the user

Data confidentiality needs to be taken into account

Users should be informed if and how record of their use of a career tool is kept.

Users should be informed of how transactions associated with a career tool e.g. internet-based counselling or financial transactions are protected

5. Supporting user's choice of career tool

Policy makers, counsellors and system developers all need to share responsibility for supporting the user in selecting good quality services on the Internet

We recommend some kind of rating or kite marking of good sites

6. Outcomes and continuity

Policy makers need to encourage and support evaluation of career tools

Policy makers need to evaluate the outcomes of different career tools (cost-benefit)

Policy makers need to make decisions about which career tools are funded

Funding decisions need to secure quality of production, evaluation and continuity of career tool

Policy makers need to make results of evaluations available

7. Guidelines, not standards

We discussed guidelines, not standards

Who sets the guidelines?

Who monitors the guidelines?

General European guidelines -> further refinement, publication, distribution and monitoring of guidelines on a national level

8. Further discussion on ethical guidelines and quality needed

The commission should take initiative to create a working group to give recommendation for guidelines at a European level

Engaging people at the national level should be done as early as possible to build ownership

9. Recommendation to the memorandum

Guidance role is presented very narrowly in the Memorandum; we recommend that brokerage and counselling are included along with guidance

The interaction between the client and the counsellor

Workshop B

Chair: Gunnel Lindh, Sweden: gunnel.lindh@ilu.uu.se

Reporter: Jyri Manninen, Finland:

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With the technique of today, the possibility to meet with a guidance counsellor on the web is easy to solve. It could be by e-mail, chat, conferences, video technique and different combinations. Internet also opens the possibility for whom-ever to provide this service. At the same time many counsellors persist in their view that career guidance can only take place in a personal meeting, eye to eye. Is career guidance the same for everyone or do we have different understanding

of the expression? For what situation are the recommendations on quality and ethics meant to be?

Recommendations from the working group:

Quality recommendations

Same professional standards and guidelines as in face-to-face guidance apply to ICT-based services

Human mediated or face-to-face interaction must always be available if needed and when needed. The individual has also a right to personal counselling.

Competent and trained person should be “on the other end of the line”.

The counsellors must have access to training how to utilise modern communication and information technologies.

Practitioners and users should have real influence on the development of new tools for interaction and some degree of responsibility concerning the materials and information. Problems and weaknesses of ICT should be recognised and solved.

Networking of professionals through ICT should be encouraged

Services ought to be transparent for clients

Special needs groups and clients with low readiness should be recognised and served properly. The services should be based on accurate diagnosis/screening of needs

Continuity of service in long term should be encouraged

European quality mark for web services should be created

More research on counselling interaction is needed. Research findings should be made easily available to different actors.

Ethics recommendations

Same professional standards and guidelines as in face-to-face guidance apply

Interests and motives of the service provider should be clearly expressed

The clients should be trusted and valued as experts of their life situations and needs

Change in Lifelong Learning policy and the possible contradiction with personal values and objectives should be recognised and communicated to clients

Confidentiality and integrity should be guaranteed in modern interaction

The development and the use of the information resources

Workshop C

Chair: Ed Riordan, Ireland: eriordan@cit.ie

Reporter: Raimo Vuorinen, Finland:

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During the last year, the number of information resources on the web, in the field of guidance and counselling has in-

creased rapidly. Sometimes you find it, as a user, difficult to understand for whom the web site is meant. The supplier, the message and the receiver are unclear. And the content could be better. What is required of the recommendations to give us higher quality and better ethics concerning the information resources in the field of career guidance?

Recommendations from the working group:

The working group stated that currently a common definition of Internet –based guidance is missing. Though, there are definitions which describe the guidance on individual level, how guidance helps individuals in their transition processes. The Euroguidance network has also provided the spectrum of definitions of guidance. There are many ways of structuring the services, and there is a need to find common ideas how to use various media in defining the Internet –based career services.

Although the theme of the seminar was web-based guidance the information services should utilize also other besides the Internet. While taking consumer perspective into account in developing the services we realize that different users need different ICT tools. The usage of telephone and fax is still valid and the technique is surviving because many users still like it. Internet-based guidance information is obviously a very important tool to meet user need in their transition processes, but we have thought carefully the quality criteria and ethics during the whole development process. One crucial question for consideration is the access and support for low-readiness Internet users.

The group raised the following questions into consideration:

Who organise the Internet-based career in-

formation; public sector or private organisations?

What should be the balance between public and private sector

What is the quality of the services, should the governments have a national quality check?

How to take into account the national perspective or are there common European level principles, which can be implemented nationally? Are overall standards of good practise possible?

The group emphasised that an Internet –based career information service should have a target group in mind in advance, a consistent and a transparent philosophy. Globally there are definitions of guidelines on quality and ethics on Internet based guidance (<http://www.ncda.org/about/polnet.html>, <http://www.nbcc.org/ethics/wcstandards.htm>, <http://www.acsci.org/standards2.htm>). These standards include aspects related to the clarity of the audience, definitions of the target groups, information on the service provider and ownership, assurance and impartiality of the information, information when last updated, contact information and transparency of the theoretical approach. Additional question was raised: to what extent general guidelines for quality web design are relevant in guidance.

The group was aware that Internet is alive all the time. Thus, it is very difficult to make stage and standards to an individual web site, though standards can be dressed to service providers. It is also difficult to define quality guidelines, which could cover each educational level from life-long learning perspective. In the private sector the end user usually decides the quality indicators, but how can the end user identify the quality on the time one uses the product?

As a whole the working group suggests that a European Expert Group should be established for producing guidelines for quality and ethics in Internet guidance. Those national authorities that are in charge of guidance services should set the guidelines. The Euroguidance network can also be an active body in collecting and disseminating the data, because they need also the same guidelines for their practise as well.

The first step for the Expert Group would be to draw the existing materials together. After the synthesis the outcome should be sent to national authorities and the European Commission. The Euroguidance network could promote the national discussion around the guidelines. The Euroguidance network provides also a platform for the transparency of the process.

Expert Group

A European Expert Group should be established to produce recommendations (guidelines) for quality and ethics in Internet-based guidance. This Expert Group would use previous research and existing models on this issue. The recommendations (guidelines) could be implemented as an extension of existing guidelines for the practice of guidance.

A further task for the Expert Group could be to develop a transparent glossary of the definitions of guidance in various settings.

The Expert Group should be composed of representatives of the Euroguidance network and International expert bodies, such as IAEVG.

The working group discussed about the presentation of Prof. Jim Sampson (Quality and Ethics in Web-based Guidance: Coping With Change and Stability). Within developing national Internet-based information services there could be better with co-operation between different ministries, often there is some overlapping and ministries do partly

segmented work. As a whole, the contribution of all participants is crucial during all the stages in designing, implementing, maintaining and evaluating the overall services. Systematic co-operation is needed not only avoiding the overlapping, but for promoting better linkages between different information sources.

The group was discussing also about joint usage of jointly produced Internet-based resources. The same material/information could be customized for different target groups. There should also be an analysis for needs of various user groups. The implementation and the quality assurance can be promoted with comprehensive staff training among professional practitioners and with mechanisms for constant feedback. This comprehensive approach would help those countries, which have currently a basic level of information available on Internet or are revising their existing systems.

An effort of existing comprehensive Internet-based career information service development is the 'Opintoluotsi' – project in Finland (<http://www.opintoluotsi.minedu.fi/>).

The Ministry of Education in Finland has started to develop a Web-based interactive national gateway for educational, training and employment opportunities for all citizens. This Opintoluotsi project is funded by the ESF. The aim is to provide comprehensive and reliable information on all publicly controlled education through one WWW address. The services offered will include support for educational solutions, and study opportunities in an information network. The Opintoluotsi project was launched in June 2000 and will continue until 2006. The Website will become available during the pilot phase in the beginning of 2002.

The development of WWW support services for educational institutions is also part of the overall project. Its aim is to promote the usability of the Opintoluotsi in cooperation with educational institutions. The staff of the institutions

will be introduced to the main principles of the service and how it can benefit their activities and the marketing of their educational provision. Institutions will be encouraged to construct and maintain WWW pages compatible with the Opintoluotsi service. In addition to helping educational organizations develop their WWW pages in a way that will further improve the function of the Opintoluotsi search service itself, the institutions will also be offered more in-depth expertise in networking issues and the Internet.

A third element in the Opintoluotsi –project is a separate interface for guidance practitioners. The basic idea of this professional front end is to create a personal web based desk top for guidance practitioners. The practitioners can use the same resources as the end users but they can also pick up the resources they use most frequently in their daily work. Additionally, they will get support and web based training modules how to best utilize the Opintoluotsi service in their daily professional work with their clients. In other words, the professional front end acts as a virtual interactive resource center for the guidance practitioners, researchers and the students in the field of guidance. It includes similar features like the Canadian counselors resource center (<http://www.crccanada.org>)

The planning and functions of Opintoluotsi are closely connected with continuous research and development. The use of the services will be monitored and evaluated through user and usability studies, the problems faced by the users and their needs will be analyzed, and the service will be developed towards even higher functionality. Dialogue between those who plan and carry out the research and design and implement the services will remain of crucial importance throughout the project

Opintoluotsi will also serve as a resource for staff responsible for educational guidance and counseling. Research will also be carried out from this point of view. In the early stages of research, information will be collected on existing national and international working methods and

projects and related user experiences. The research objective will be to determine how the Opintoluotsi WWW services can support the development of a guidance and counseling policy and the ways in which practical experience in guidance and counseling can be used in developing the overall service. Another focus of research will be to determine how services utilizing information technology change the work of professionals in guidance and counseling

Stakeholders

Planning and establishing of the Internet guidance services should be a systematic joint process between the key stakeholders: all the public authorities

- funding agents
- policy makers
- researchers
- developers
- practitioners
- end users
- social partners

These points are especially relevant for situations where there is presently a basic level of information available.

Each group of stakeholders can use a jointly produced resource as a joint tool with access at different appropriate levels. For example a web-based training module for practitioners could be embedded as an additional feature of an information site.

The Internet-based guidance resources can greatly enhance the effectiveness of guidance professionals. The public

authorities should provide additional funding to fully utilize this potential. Within the available resources priorities should be set by consultation with the stakeholders.

Coherence of provision

Systematic funding should be allocated for all stages of the service, development, implementation, staff training, feedback from the end users, systematic evaluation. Research should be integrated in the process. All these elements should be maintained with constant quality.

The European Commission Memorandum for lifelong learning emphasises the consumer perspective. Thus there is a need for different interfaces/pathways for different users. In defining the end users we have to think both current adults and the future generations. According to the working group there is also a need for the revision the curriculum for grades 1-12. The perspective should be lifelong learning from the very beginning – to empower the adolescents to life long learning not only tells them about it. The career education programmes should take into account what skills would be needed in life long learning, how to face the new dimensions of information. Critical thinking is needed earlier than at the late transition stage from education to work. For adults we need retraining for employability skills. We should have guidance aspect for the usage of Internet in terms of life long learning. The guidance expertise should have impact for the curriculum development. In the group there was presented an example of career education software for primary schools: ‘The Paw in Jobland’ (<http://www.paws-in-jobland.co.uk>).

According to the working group we should also be aware the lack of access to Internet-based resources. We should also identify the nature of access. To what extent it is lack of skills or hardware? The public authorities have a duty to promote the access for internet and this should include

several groups of users – clients – professionals – policy makers – trainers – researchers – other stake holders as well as employers. On the other hand we must be realistic of the existing facilities and budgeting. Thus there is an need to define priorities, to how many different target groups we can provide with customized Internet-based resources?

Lifelong learning

The key message 5 in the European Commission Memorandum on Lifelong Learning specifies that guidance should be continuously and locally accessible. Internet-based guidance information is obviously a very important tool to meet these objectives. The resources should be very carefully targeted to meet the needs of various user groups. Low-readiness users and marginalized user groups need special attention.

It is important to give the coming generations good skills for life long learning. This must include access to appropriate guidance materials on the Internet at all stages of education.

Interactivity

When developing Internet-based resources the emphasis should be on the potential of all communication features of Internet, including especially the interactive elements. The greater the level of interactivity, the greater the need for ethical guidelines.

The European Portal

The working group welcomes the concept of European portal/gateway for learning opportunities and hopes that it will be a model of good practise. In addition to the database on learning opportunities the portal should also host a working area for guidance practitioners. This should include web-

based training modules. The portal could also include definitions for guidance produced by the Expert Group. The output of the Gothenburg conference could be taken into account in constructing the portal.

The working group welcomes the OECD and European Commission current joint initiatives in promoting discussions around the policy and practice in Career Counselling. Though, the working group was referring to the statements of Tony Watts during the first day of the conference. In his presentation he expressed the need for updating the comparative study of career guidance provision in the European Union member states. The development of the European portal for learning opportunities could host also information for policy makers, professionals and researchers.

According to the working group it was difficult to evaluate current quality in Internet-based guidance in respect to the Dublin conference recommendations in 1996 because there had not been any systematic follow up after the conference. The working group discussed about those previous recommendations and decided to repeat two of them. Additionally the group suggests the 6th European conference in guidance and a systematic follow up of the Gothenburg conference recommendations.

Further research

A transnational study of the level of the use of Internet among the practitioners should be carried out. This should be combined with the results of the national 'mapping' carried out for the Gothenburg conference.

Tasks

The group wants to repeat the recommendations number 7 and 11 of the Dublin conference. (7 – National policies for

training of guidance counsellors in ICT; 11 – Each member state to establish a national guidance forum).

Follow up

There should be an annual systematic follow up of the implementation of recommendations of this conference.

The access to ICT and web-based guidance, both mentally and physically

Workshop D

Chair: Christian Råbergh, Sweden:
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Reporter: Marcus Offer, UK: marcus@winchester.u-net.com

If more and more tools are put on the web, there also has to be a guarantee for the citizens access to the web. Physical accesses as well as mentally access. Already today, self-service is the bases for the employment offices in Sweden and perhaps also in other countries. But how can all citizens get access? And can all citizens manage the access by themselves? Can we guarantee the necessary support? What will be the recommendations for quality and ethics on this theme?

Recommendations from the working group:

Guidance practitioners should be skilled and confident in the use of Internet-based guidance resources. Accordingly, guidance

services and providers of initial and in-service training should ensure that opportunities to develop such skills and confidence are available to all practitioners and the practitioners themselves should take responsibility for their continued professional development.

Developers should design Internet-based services, which take account of the needs of their target groups. This might include, for example, special attention given to explaining how a web site works, developing accessible and immediately relevant content, or accommodating special needs for a more or less graphic interface.

Education providers should ensure that young people leaving the educational system are equipped with the skills and confidence to be lifelong critical users of Internet-based guidance services

To support lifelong learning everyone should be able to get free access to Internet-based guidance services whenever they need them. In particular, ICT resources currently often locked in public buildings outside "normal" office hours could be used more efficiently by more people and guidance centres could consider extending their opening hours.

Guidance services should make proactive use of the potential of the Internet to support and promote outreach in creative and unconventional ways. ICT can make human contact with guidance professionals more

widely available, for example, and may be particularly effective when used by them to offer their expertise to others already working with disadvantaged groups.

The first six recommendations, in particular, of the 1996 Dublin Conference, "Guidance in the Information Society" refers to issues to do with access and should be revisited and followed.

The Memorandum on Lifelong Learning

Our recommendations 1 and 3 are specific examples of the development and use of the digital literacy referred to in section 4.1 of the paper and the attempt to reduce the digital divide. They also imply investment in human resources in ways consonant with the key message in 4.2. In guidance services as elsewhere, people are a key resource.

Recommendations 2 and 4 relate to key message 3 on innovation: in teaching and learning – guidance is itself a form of learning as well as an access point. Rethinking guidance and counselling as key message 5 suggests, may mean "a new approach...which envisages guidance as a continuously accessible service for all". Our recommendations 4 and 5 are particularly concerned with "reaching out to new publics." (4.5, paragraph 3).

The new role of the guidance counsellors and its place in the initial and further training

Workshop E

Chair: Hans-Jürgen Lüschen, Germany:
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Reporter: Anders Lovén, Sweden: anders.loven@lut.mah.se

The use of ICT in guidance demands a new role of the guidance counsellor. Earlier, the guidance counsellors were in charge of the tools, both the information and other tools. Today the customers/clients, especially young people have more information than the counsellors themselves and sometimes they have done a test on the web. On the other hand the guidance counsellors could also be working with the web, both the information part and the interactive part of web-based guidance. How does the training cope with the new role? Does the basic training of guidance counsellors cover the role of the 'web'-counsellor? How is the already trained guidance counsellor re-trained to cope with the changes? What will be the recommendations on quality and ethics in the field of training of guidance counsellors?

Recommendations from the working group:

The new role must recognise the digital divide and our provision must be equal for all

The new role must help those who cannot help themselves

The new role must recognise the different learning styles and provide services that are appropriately targeted

The new role must define the way we work with the technology, the technology should not define the way we work

The new role must work to ethical and quality standards that take into account Internet-based guidance

The new role should inform the work of developers and not be led by them

The new role must test and evaluate existing counselling theories in the context of Internet based guidance

Programme

Quality and Ethics in Web-based Guidance, 25–27 June 2001

Conference site: University of Gothenburg, Humanisten, Renströmsgatan 6, Gothenburg, Sweden

Saturday, June 23

Swedish Midsummer celebrations
(participation on a voluntary base).

Sunday, June 24

No Programme during the day

Monday, June 25

09.00 Coffee and Registration

09.30 Opening Plenary Session

Lifelong Learning in a Career Guidance Perspective

General Director Boo Sjögren, The International
Programme Office, Sweden

Ms Laura Cassio, European Commission DG
Education and Culture, Brussels

Director Lars-Olov Lernberg, Education
Authority Gothenburg, Sweden

Director Kerstin Thoursi, The Ministry of
Education and Science

10.10 Plenary Session

Guidance for Lifelong Learning in an IT-world
By Director Kenneth Herder, County Labour
Board of Västra Götaland, Sweden

10.30 Plenary Session

Career Guidance in Modern Settings
By General Director Mats Ekholm, The National
Agency for Education, Sweden

10.55 Break

11.15 Plenary Session

Virtual Guidance: Visions and Values
By Mr Tony Watts, NICEC, United Kingdom

12.15 Presentation of the result from the 'mapping'

12.30 Lunch

14.00 Parallel workshops on the five themes

A – Interactive career tools and tests on the web

B – The interaction between the client and the
counsellor

C – The development and the use of information
sources

D – The access to ICT, both mentally and
physically

E – The new role of the guidance counsellors and
it's place in initial and further training

15.30 Refreshment Break
The parallel workshops continues until 17.00

19.00 Reception at the City Hall offered by the
City/Education Authority of Gothenburg

Tuesday, June 26

09:00 Plenary Session
Quality and Ethics in Web-based Guidance:
Coping with Change and Stability
By Professor Jim Sampson, Florida State
University, USA

10:00 Plenary Session
Lifelong Learning and Career Guidance
By Mr Gösta Mårtensson, The Committee of
Guidance in the Swedish Schools System

10.45 Refreshments

11.15 The Parallel Workshops continues

12.30 Lunch

13.30 The Parallel Workshops continues

14.30 Refreshment Break
The Parallel Workshops continues until 15.30

15.30 Time for Chairpersons and Reporters to prepare
the conclusions

18.30 Buss leaving the hotel

19.00 The Ferry leaves for Elfsborgs Fästning

20.00 Dinner and Dance

Wednesday, June 27

09.30 Presentation of the recommendations from the
working groups

10.30 Refreshments

11.00 Presentation of the recommendations from the
working groups continues

12:00 Plenary Session
Lifelong Learning in a Career Guidance
Perspective, Conclusions
*By Senior Advisor KG Lidström,
The International Programme Office
Ms Laura Cassio, The European Commission DG
Education and Culture*

13.00 Lunch and departure

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Conference evaluation

Quality and Ethics in Web-based Guidance

25–27 June 2001, Gothenburg, Sweden

Results from the conference evaluation

The conference had 78 participants from various countries. Of these, 10 persons were either organisers or experts from EU countries. Out of the remaining 68 persons, 36 handed in evaluation sheets. The response rate was 53%.

Conclusions

Conference results

The idea of having a conference on quality and ethics in web-based guidance was a success. 97% of the respondents thought that the idea was excellent or good. One of the conference aims was to give the participants new ideas concerning web-based guidance, 78% said that they had been inspired, got new ideas and inputs, especially mentioned is ideas about ICT-based guidance.

We also asked the participants whether they thought that the recommendations presented can be a foundation for policymaking in the future? The majority (86%) of the respondents answered yes or maybe. They think though that the

recommendations have to be more precise and concrete. There is also an opinion that someone (i.e. the commission) needs to take action in order to implement the recommendations otherwise it will be “just like after Dublin”.

Conference programme

Almost all plenary sessions and workshops are given positive marks by the respondents.

In general more than 72% think that all plenary sessions were excellent or good, for the workshops, 84 %.

Specially mentioned is the plenary session about “Virtual Guidance, visions and Values” and Quality and Ethics in web-based guidance” where 92 % respectively 94% of the respondents thought it was excellent or good. “Very

interesting and important comments” and “Excellent – I got a framework to organise my own thinking on” is among the comments.

Concerning the workshops and the presentations of the recommendations from them are also given high remarks. The majority (84%) thought that group work had been productive. “Professional presentations”, “Many interesting points were raised” and “Lot of good work during short time” is among the comments. In the workshop on “The new role of the guidance....” (e) there are some complaints about the size of the group. Some participants thought that it was too large in order to have good discussions.

Conference management

The comments about the conference management are very positive in comparison to other conferences. In general Pre-conference activities and information, Conference structure, Conference materials and Social events are said to be excellent or good by more than 90% of the respondents. Comments like “Very well prepared conference”, “Well done, a relaxing but productive environment” and “Perfect organisation” can illustrate these good marks given to the organizers.

Further comments about the conference

It is necessary to focus more on research in the workshops. It seems as if counselling approaches is too traditional.

I hope that next conference can focus on best practising regarding Internet based counselling.

CONFERENCE IN GENERAL

The idea of having a conference on Quality and Ethics in Web-based Guidance

Excellent 55% (20)	Good 42% (15)	Satisfactory 3% (1)	Poor 0
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The overall quality of the conference

Excellent 47% (17)	Good 47% (17)	Satisfactory 6% (2)	Poor 0
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CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Opening session: Career Guidance (Monday June 25)

Excellent 17% (6) Good 60% (22) Satisfactory 17% (6) Poor 6% 2

Plenary session: Virtual Guidance, Visions and Values (Monday June 25)

Excellent 42% (15) Good 50% (18) Satisfactory 6% (2) Poor 0 NA 2% (1)

Plenary session: Quality and Ethics in Web-based Guidance (Tuesday June 26)

Excellent 61% (22) Good 33% (12) Satisfactory 6% (2) Poor 0

Plenary session: Lifelong Learning and Career Guidance (Tuesday June 26)

Excellent 11% (4) Good 22% (8) Satisfactory 39% (14) Poor 28% (10)

Presentation of the recommendations from the working groups (Wednesday June 27)

Excellent 42% (15) Good 47% (17) Satisfactory 8% (3) Poor 0 NA 3% (1)

Plenary session: Lifelong Learning in a Career Guidance Perspective – Conclusions (Wednesday June 27)

Excellent 33% (12) Good 39% (14) Satisfactory 8% (3) Poor 1% NA 19% (7)

WORKSHOPS

Excellent 42% (15) Good 42% (15) Satisfactory 14% (5) Poor 0 NA 3% (1)

CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT

Pre-conference activities and information

Excellent 53% (19) Good 36% (13) Satisfactory 3% (1) Poor 3% (1) NA 6% (2)

The overall conference structure

Excellent 72% (26) Good 28% (10) Satisfactory 0 Poor 0

Quality of conference packet/materials

Excellent 53% (19) Good 42% (15) Satisfactory 3% (1) Poor 0

The social events

Excellent 78% (28) Good 19% (7) Satisfactory 3% (1) Poor 0

THE CONFERENCE RESULTS

1. Do you think that the recommendations presented during the conference can be a foundation for policymaking in the future?

Yes 47% (17) No 3% (1) Maybe 39% (14) NA 11% (4)

2. Do you think that this conference has given you new ideas concerning web-based guidance in Commission's memorandum on Lifelong learning?

Yes 53% (19) No 8% (3) Maybe 25% (9) NA 3% (1)

