Study on

'Indicators and benchmarks for Lifelong Guidance'

Draft Final Report

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Further copies of the report can be downloaded from:
http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Projects_Networks/Guidance/expertgroup/thematic_projects.asp

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1.   Executive Summary

1.1.   Context

This report contains the results of a preliminary study, commissioned by CEDEFOP and carried out by Stoas Research in association with the University of Twente, on the feasibility of developing indicators and benchmarks for guidance. The study was intended to support the work of the European Commission's Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance and contribute to the follow-up of the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme and to the implementation of the Council Resolution on guidance throughout life which identifies high quality guidance provision and the strengthening of structures for policy and systems development at national and regional levels as priorities.

1.2.   Aims

The specific aims of the study were to provide information about the extent to which indicators and benchmarks in guidance were in use at national level, review the availability of data at European level and propose a strategy for the future development of indicators and benchmarks.

1.3.   Working methods

The first phase of the study consisted of a literature review, the definition of terms, the development of a typology for guidance providers and provision, a model framework of key issues in lifelong guidance as well as the identification of areas for possible indicators. In the second phase of the study a questionnaire was prepared and sent to members of the Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance and members of the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks to get their views on the model and possible indicators and clarify the availability of data. During the first and second phases desk research of secondary sources (mainly the relevant parts of the career guidance policy reviews undertaken by the OECD, Cedefop and the ETF), was carried out and simultaneously good examples of practice in the use of indicators and benchmarks were sought. In the final phase of the study the responses to the questionnaire and the requests for examples of practice were analysed and the final report and recommendations prepared.

1.4.   Summary of final report contents

Chapter 1 explains the rationale behind the launching of the study, its intended outcomes and the lay-out of the final report. Chapter 2 summarises the results of the literature review. Chapter 3 outlines the results of the responses to the questionnaire and chapter 4 gives an overview of data collected on guidance in the Member States and an example of an approach to the evaluation of guidance. Chapter 5 presents the main findings and conclusions from the study and sets out recommendations for the development of indicators and benchmarks for guidance in the medium and long term.

1.5.   Main conclusions

The literature review, the analysis of the synthesis reports and 29 national responses to the career guidance policy reviews (containing data gathered between 2001 and 2003), and the replies to the indicators study questionnaire, showed that:

- although several countries do collect some data on various aspects of guidance services and their use, there was **no evidence of the use of actual indicators or benchmarks**[1] either at the European or at the national level;

- **the comparability of the data collected at national level is not clear**.

- where **data** is available it **tends to cover a limited number of issues only** (e.g. coverage or participation in guidance and, to a lesser extent, the financing of guidance).

- although more data on guidance may be collected at European level in the future (for example through the inclusion of questions on the take up of guidance services in the Adult Education Survey), **currently very little data is available at European level**.

- **much of what is called lifelong guidance is highly integrated in other work**, e.g. teaching or HRD. This complicates the measurement of inputs and processes in and outputs and outcomes of lifelong guidance.

The study concludes that **the limited nature of the data collected** at national level and the **lack of comparability** between countries, combined with the **lack of data at European level**, **preclude the possibility of introducing an indicator or benchmark on guidance in the short term**. The study also concludes that **the causal attribution of values on outcome indicators to values on input or process indicators is an ambition that can rarely be made true**. Even in studies that are very close to a research study, like the PISA-study, attributing differences in student performance to system, school and classroom conditions has to be done with a lot of caution. Conclusions in this study are usually drawn in terms of associations, or influences, rather than causes or determinants.

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[1]   See definition of indicators and benchmarks in appendix 1 of this report.

1.6. Main recommendations

For the mid-term it is proposed that further work be done to:

- **clarify which services can be characterised as guidance and which cannot;**

- **develop indicators for coverage(2) and financial means spent on guidance.**

For the long term it is proposed that:

- **the study on the typology of providers, services and target groups, and provisions be deepened** to ensure comparison of like with like;
- **output indicators, such as user satisfaction and learning and career management competences be developed**.

(²) This means the extent to which various target groups participate in guidance.

2.   Introduction

2.1.   Background

The European Union(³) considers lifelong guidance to be one of the crucial elements for achieving the four public policy goals related to the Lisbon Strategy: life long learning, social inclusion, labour market efficiency, and economic development. Lifelong guidance is also considered as one of the key levers for open, attractive and accessible learning environments, and for supporting learning at all ages and in a range of settings, empowering citizens to manage their learning and work. Effective information, guidance and counselling services are seen as important factors in achieving these goals. It therefore calls for the strengthening of the role, quality and co-ordination of these services. The development of common European references and principles to support national policies, systems and practices for lifelong guidance is a priority.

One of the conclusions of the career guidance policy review covering 37 countries initiated by the OECD and extended by the Commission (courtesy of Cedefop and the ETF) and the World Bank, was that there is a need to improve the information base for policy and systems development decisions for lifelong guidance. The collection of improved data should be organised concerning the financial and human resources allocated to lifelong guidance, on citizen need and demand, on the characteristics of users, on user satisfaction and on the outcomes and cost-effectiveness of lifelong guidance.

In December 2002, the European Commission established the Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance. This Expert Group decided that furthering reflection on indicators is an important part of promoting a common understanding of the basic concepts and underlying principles for lifelong guidance.

2.2.   Aim of the study

The study examines the feasibility of creating European level indicators and benchmarks on lifelong guidance and provides an overview of key issues in lifelong guidance, based on which potential areas for indicators are identified. The study sets out strategic recommendations for the development of indicators and benchmarks for the short, the medium and the long term.

(³)   See for example the Council Resolution on guidance throughout life adopted in May 2004 http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/vocational_en.html

2.3.   Planning of the study

The study consisted of two cycles of data collection and analysis and a recommendations part. The first cycle of data collection and analysis used EU and national literature on lifelong guidance. The results of this cycle are fully described in the interim report[4] and are summarised in this present report. The second cycle used both the reflections of experts on the outcomes of the literature study and good examples of policy and practice. The results of this cycle are described in this report. Based on both these cycles of data collection and analysis, recommendations are put forward for consideration by the European Commission Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance concerning the feasibility of, and a strategy for, the short, medium and long term development of indicators and benchmarks in lifelong guidance.

2.4.   Lay out of the report

Chapter 2 summarises the interim report, which covered the results of the first cycle of data collection and analysis: the literature study.

The literature study yielded 1) a framework for a typology of providers and provisions, 2) a categorisation of key issues in lifelong guidance, and based on that 3) a list of possible areas for (the development of) indicators and benchmarks in the field. We developed a questionnaire in which experts in the field of lifelong guidance and/or indicators and benchmarks were asked to reflect on the framework and issues and provide information on the availability of data for any of the areas of possible indicators. Chapter 3 describes the results of the responses to this questionnaire.

Chapter 4 analyses possible approaches to further the work on indicators and benchmarks. It therefore provides a review of the data collected at national level as described in the 29 European national responses to the career guidance policy reviews undertaken by the OECD, Cedefop and the ETF between 2001 and 2003. Next to that, it presents an example of practice in the evaluation of guidance.

In chapter 5 we draw conclusions from the data analysed in both this and the interim report and provide recommendations concerning the feasibility and the strategy for the development of indicators and benchmarks in the field.

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[4]   The interim report can be downloaded from:

http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Projects_Networks/Guidance/expertgroup/thematic_projects.asp

3. Summary of the interim report

3.1. products

The interim report covered a literature study and the analysis of this literature. The first revealing result of this study was the fact that we did not find any literature on actual indicators([5]) and benchmarks in use, either at European or at national level. The analysis of the available literature, using a multi level model, resulted in three products:

(a) a framework for the typology of providers and provisions,

(b) a model of key issues in lifelong guidance, and

(c) a list of potential areas for possible indicators

In the next three paragraphs we briefly summarize these results. For further detailed information we refer to the interim report.

Framework for the typology of providers and provisions

Based on the information from the literature study we discerned three major variables to describe the providers and provisions, namely: providers, the services they provide and the target groups on which they focus.

([5]) See definition of indicators and benchmarks in appendix 1 of this final report.

Table 1:   Framework for the description of providers and provisions

Types of providers	Types of services	Target groups			
		youth in initial education/training	adults in continuing education/training	unemployed	employed
education/ training institutes	Information individual advice and counselling learning & career management competency building				
Enterprises	Information individual advice and counselling learning & career management competency building				
Employment agencies	Information individual advice and counselling learning & career management competency building				
Specialised organisations/ centres	Information individual advice and counselling learning & career management competency building				
community / welfare organisations	Information individual advice and counselling learning & career management competency building				

These three variables were combined into a three-dimensional framework for the typology of providers and provisions. Table 1 shows this framework. This framework is presented in the questionnaire we sent out to experts in the field of lifelong guidance and indicators and benchmarks. These experts were asked to report on the guidance activities in their countries using the framework.

3.2.   Key issues in lifelong guidance

Table 2 presents the key issues in lifelong guidance that we identified from the literature review. These key issues are the basis for identifying possible areas for indicators that are described in paragraph 2.3.

Table 2:   Key issues in lifelong guidance

	Input	**Process**	**Output**	**Context**
Individual level	1.1. Number and characteristics of participants 1.2. Qualification of staff	2.1. Content of services	3.1. User satisfaction 3.2. Personal development 3.3. Policy related output	4.1. User characteristics
Organisational level	1.3. Availability of services	2.2. Quality management and delivery		4.2. Entrepreneurial climate/'room to move' 4.3. Infrastructure
National level	1.4. Financial means 1.5 Policy	2.3. Quality management and delivery 2.4. Coherence	[1]	4.4. Social, educational and labour-market situations

Consideration was given to defining areas for potential indicators for outputs and outcomes on both the organisational and the national levels (the two empty fields in Table 2). Indicators for Educational and for Social and Economic outputs and outcomes on National level are available for Europe. The relationships between guidance and any of these indicators are indirect. Educational, Social and Economic outputs and outcomes are influenced by many factors other than guidance (see also paragraph 4.3.1). It would therefore be potentially dangerous to use any of these indicators as indicators for guidance. In the questionnaire that was sent out to experts in the field of lifelong career guidance and of indicators and benchmarks, we have invited suggestions for alternative approaches for these areas. We will come back to this issue in paragraph 3.4, paragraph 3.7 and in chapter 5.

3.3.   Proposed areas for possible indicators

The key issues listed in Table 2 were further developed into areas for possible indicators. These are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: **Categorised areas for possible indicators**

	INPUT	PROCESS	OUPUT

Individual level	**Number and characteristics of users**
	1. Coverage
	2. Coverage broken down by
	  a. socio-economic status
	  b. age
	  c. level of education
	  d. gender
	  e. ethnic group
	3. Coverage of target groups
	Qualifications of staff
	4. Duration (in months) of specialised guidance training of staff
		Content of services
		14. Average time per user of the service
		15. Focus of service (problem-solving, learning and career management skills[6])
		16. Guidance activities used (e.g. information, advice, assessment, counselling, APL, mentoring, work-experience)
		17. Means used (e.g. telephone, face-to-face, on-line, outreach)
			User satisfaction
			5. Level of user satisfaction with the service provided
			
			Personal development
			6. Learning & career management skills
			7. Job satisfaction or satisfaction with study or training
			
			Policy related outputs
			8. % of users of services obtaining a (new) job
			9. % of users of services commencing ed/training programme
			10. % of users completing ed/training programme

Organisational level	**Time and money available for guidance**
	11. Time reserved for guidance in task description of personnel
	12. Expenditure on guidance material
	13. Expenditure on hiring professionals/ agencies
		Quality management & delivery
		18. Availability and use of data on:
		  a. the quality of the management of the service
		  b. the quality of delivery of the service
		  c. monitoring and inspection
		    user feedback	

National level	**Financial means** 19. Financial resources allocated to guidance (by ministries including for contracted out services) **Policy** 20. Attention to guidance in policy making (legislation, measures and initiatives)	**Coherence** 21. Extent of coherence between national policy and the policies of the 5 different types of provider 22. Number of cross-sectoral co-ordination bodies and conferences or forum discussions on guidance	

This overview was used in the questionnaire as well. Experts were asked to rank the relevance of each of the areas. They were also asked to provide information about the availability of data for each of these areas in their countries.

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[6]   The literature study led us to discern two approaches concerning lifelong career guidance: 1) a problem solving approach and 2) a life long learning skills approach. The first approach concerns guidance for users that have a problem concerning the choice of job or the subject of study. The second approach aims at providing people with skills that enable them to manage their careers. These approaches are not mutually exclusive.

4. Data collection among experts in the field

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter summarised the outputs of the first phase of this study:

1. a framework for the typology of providers and provisions;

2. a framework of 16 key issues in lifelong guidance and;

3. a list of 22 potential areas for indicators.

To gain insight into the relevance of these outputs for the development of a coherent set of indicators and benchmarks in the future we asked experts in the field of lifelong guidance and/or indicators and benchmarks to reflect on them. Therefore we developed a questionnaire. The respondents were invited to give:

    (a) their views on whether they think the framework for the typology of providers and provisions is complete or if any aspect is irrelevant or if any crucial category is missing;

    (b) their views on the framework of 16 key issues in lifelong guidance and whether the framework is complete or any topics are missing;

    (c) their opinions on the relative priority of the 22 potential areas for indicators and their opinions on whether any key areas have been overlooked;

    (d) information about the availability of data for each of these areas in their countries.

The response figures are presented in paragraph 3.2 and the results are outlined in the following paragraphs in the order presented above.

4.2. Response

The questionnaire was sent to all the members of the European Commission Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks (SGIB) and all the members of the Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance as well as to 6 experts recommended by the SGIB, making a total of 60 people. Only twelve responses were received (20%) covering 11 countries, namely: Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany (2x), Greece, Hungary, Malta, The Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. The respondents work in varied environments including research centres, university institutes as well as Education and Labour ministries.

The questionnaire was also made available on Cedefop's lifelong guidance Virtual Community (VC) to give those working in the broader guidance community the opportunity to

feed in their views. Three members of the VC (from England, Italy and Scotland) provided comments on the questionnaire and the proposed framework.

We considered responses from as many European countries as possible more important than a high response rate in general. Although the respondents are relatively well spread over Europe and over the countries both in size and region, the majority of European countries are not represented. Therefore we cannot claim to be able to generalise the conclusions to Europe as a whole. Moreover the respondents cannot be considered experts in all subjects covered by the questionnaire and several did not reply to all sections or parts of sections of the questionnaire owing to a lack of expertise in that particular topic, a lack of data or a lack of time. This also explains why the number of respondents answering a question might vary per question. The results can therefore only be used to gain a first impression of the situation in Europe and to give an indication of the usefulness of the proposed frameworks and areas of possible indicators.

4.3.   The framework for the typology of providers and provisions

Although we cannot be sure that the responses the experts gave with respect to the framework are fully comparable, the pattern of responses supports the idea that the basic notion behind the framework has some validity. These patterns are:

- education/ training institutes mostly provide guidance to youth in initial- and adult in continuing education;

- enterprises are mostly concerned with employed; and

- employment agencies provide services for the unemployed.

However, providers that focus on a broader audience can be found as well, e.g. enterprises that work with youth and adults in education/ training, employment agencies that are concerned with employed and students as well; and educational institutes that supply training for employed and unemployed. Specialised organisations mainly work with all target groups, as do the organisations summarised as belonging to the 'community' sector.

Although we might conclude from this finding that the framework worked well, the categorisations were criticised by some experts. We discuss these in the following order: the categories of providers first, then the categories of types of services and finally the categories of the types of target groups.

The experts were asked to fill in the framework for the typology of providers and provisions with the names of the organisations that provide each of the services mentioned in the framework. We asked the experts to do this in order to be sure that the responses were as concrete as possible.

The two German experts experienced difficulties with this more than any of the other respondents. One writes: "It is difficult to answer - as the situation is more diverse in the sectors. For example a special organisation or centre (mostly publicly funded) is often devoted to target groups (women, disabled) - there is a good service for the target group". These experts indicated that the categories of providers did not explicitly make clear how to categorise German organisations that provide guidance, such as the Chambers of Commerce and Crafts, the Social Insurance Agency and self-employed psychologists providing guidance. The Austrian expert felt a category was missing concerning co-operation between organisations, "e.g. co-operation between social partners, communities and public funding". Finally, one German expert felt that important issues such as 'the learning region' and 'lifelong learning' should have been taken into account in the categories of providers. Certain bureaus in Germany specialise in guidance in this field.

Adding categories or subcategories of specialised organisations can solve these problems only partly.

The categorisation of the services provided did not generally present many problems to the experts. Yet, hardly any of the respondents made much differentiation between the categories we discerned. It remains unclear whether the respondents misunderstood the categories or thought it was irrelevant to distinguish them. The French expert, for instance, indicates that it is difficult to distinguish career guidance from personal guidance: "the *missions locales* have to take care of the general needs of youngsters, which include both social and professional life".

In general, the experts seem to have used the categories of the target groups as we intended. One of the German experts, the UK expert and the Greek expert made comments about missing categories. The comments of the German and the UK experts concern disabled and disadvantaged people. The comment of the UK expert shows that this categorisation needs further attention: "Much of UK provision is currently targeted at specific 'disadvantaged' groups, rather than being seen as a right or requirement for all. In particular there is a policy focus (and therefore funding issues) on those with no or low qualifications. There are a range of other priority groups which lie outside of those you have listed here so it is difficult to plot UK provision onto those groups without making generalisations. Some providers will serve some of the groups, but other providers (who may be funded through the same stream) will likely target other groups entirely."

One of the German experts also commented on categorising youth in continuing education and youth in tertiary education. The Greek expert also mentions the latter. This comment matches the finding that although most countries have services for students and unemployed, very few possibilities are available for employed. This is confirmed by the results of the career guidance policy reviews carried out by the OECD[7], CEDEFOP, the ETF and the World

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[7] See the synthesis reports from this work as well as the national responses at:
http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Projects_Networks/Guidance/Career_Guidance_survey/
http://oecdpublications.gfi-nb.com/cgi-bin/OECDBookShop.storefront/EN/product/912004011P1

Bank. With regard to the framework this problem could be solved by broadening the category of youth in initial education / training to youth in formal education / training.

4.3.1. Reflection

Although in general the experts were able to use the framework to outline the main guidance organisations and activities in their countries, the criticism of the categories we discerned cannot be ignored. The framework aims at providing a basis for comparison. In order to be able to compare countries on aspects of guidance, a clear understanding of what is compared is an absolute necessity. Providers, services and target groups – the variables we used for the framework – are organised differently in each country.

The main problems can be categorised as follows:

- the categorisations are incomplete (this mainly concerns the target groups);

- the categorisation is not used (this concerns services):

    (i)   either because respondents misunderstood the categories,

    (ii)   or because respondents thought it was irrelevant to distinguish them;

- the categorisation does not cover reality (this mainly concerns providers):

    (i)   either because actual providers do not fit in any of the categories,

    (ii)   or because the provider (or the co-operating providers) fits into more than one category.

Simply adding categories does not solve the problem. We chose to discern categories on the three variables for providers and provisions mentioned above, implying that these three aspects are the main aspects that describe the practice of lifelong guidance. We assumed that the organisation (and with that the funding) of guidance, the content of practice (what the counsellors do) and the people they do these things with are the basic variables that enable comparison. We still think they are. Apparently we only partially succeeded in finding the right categories for these basic variables. This study cannot solve this problem. More research is needed.

4.4. Key issues in lifelong guidance and areas for possible indicators

In general the responses concerning the key issues and the list of possible areas for indicators are positive. Several experts do not give any remarks or say that it is rather complete in their opinion. Some mention possible problems measuring these items. Particularly distinguishing guidance work from other activities, in educational institutes is considered to be problematic. We will come back to this later in this section. One choice we made when categorising key

issues in lifelong guidance was criticised, namely the choice to exclude any output issues on organisational or national level. We made this choice because output measures on these levels, such as GDP and percentage of unemployed, are influenced by many other factors than guidance alone. We therefore decided to include only output at the individual level in the framework. In the questionnaire we invited any suggestions for alternative approaches for these areas. The following remarks are made in response to this invitation:

- "We agree that social, educational and labour-market outcomes should be part of the context and not seen as output of guidance".

- "I understand that it is dangerous to establish a direct relationship between guidance and specific outcomes but on the other hand I think it is equally dangerous not to relate guidance with policy outcomes. Therefore I propose to give some further consideration to the outcomes of guidance at organizational level only".

- "Although we recognise that output as far as educational and labour market status is concerned is influenced by many factors, we find that there is a direct link between guidance, the transitions process and the capability to finish the education at the next step".

One expert gave some further suggestions for indicators:

- Ratio number of users and number of staff

- Percentage of students, unemployed, etc that received guidance

4.5.   Priorities of possible areas of indicators

For this topic we presented all proposed areas in a table and asked the experts to state the relevance of each area on a 4-point-scale (extremely relevant, relevant, less relevant or not relevant). In general the perception of the relevance of the suggested areas of indicators is very positive. For all areas a majority of the respondents indicates that it is relevant or extremely relevant. As we have seen in the former paragraph only a few suggestions are made on missing topics or areas that should be redefined.

All responses are presented in Table 7 in appendix 2.

Four areas of possible indicators are considered relevant or extremely relevant by all experts that answered the question. These areas are:

- coverage (6 extremely relevant, 5 relevant),

- time reserved for guidance in the task description of personnel (5 extremely relevant, 5 relevant),

- the availability and use of data on the quality of delivery of the service for quality assurance purposes (6 extremely relevant, 3 relevant), and

- the availability and use of data on user feedback for quality assurance purposes (4 extremely relevant, 5 relevant).

Nine areas are judged relevant or extremely relevant by most of the experts; only one or two find the area less relevant, or one not relevant. These areas are:

- coverage broken down by age (5 extremely relevant, 5 relevant, 1 less relevant)
- coverage broken down by level of education (4 extremely relevant, 6 relevant, 1 less relevant)
- coverage broken down by gender (3 extremely relevant, 6 relevant, 2 less relevant)
- coverage of target groups (4 extremely relevant, 4 relevant, 1 not relevant)
- expenditure on guidance material (4 extremely relevant, 5 relevant, 1 less relevant)
- means used for guidance (e.g. telephone, etc.) (4 extremely relevant, 6 relevant, 1 less relevant)
- financial resources allocated to guidance (3 extremely relevant, 7 relevant, 1 less relevant)
- attention to guidance in policy making (6 extremely relevant, 3 relevant, 2 less relevant)

Seven areas are considered less relevant by 3 or more experts or not relevant by 2 experts, namely:

- coverage broken down by socio-economic status (4 less relevant)
- coverage broken down by ethnic group (4 less relevant)
- duration of specialised guidance training of staff for the judgement about the qualification of staff (2 not relevant)
- learning and career management skills as output measure for personal development (3 less relevant)
- % of users completing education/training programme as policy related output measure (2 not relevant)
- expenditure on hiring professionals/ agencies as measure for time and money available for guidance (3 less relevant)
- extent of coherence between national policy and the policies of the 5 different types of providers (4 less relevant)
- number of cross-sectoral co-ordination bodies and conferences or forum discussions on guidance (4 less relevant).

Coverage is the only area about the relevance of which all experts agree. Six experts think it is extremely relevant and five think it is relevant. Most experts also agree about that it is relevant to break down coverage by age, level of education and gender and about the area of coverage of target groups. Fewer experts are positive about breaking down coverage by socio-economic status and ethnic group. According to 4 experts this breakdown is less relevant.

The two topics under qualification of staff (duration of training and user feedback) are regarded as relevant by most experts.

The output measure 'level of user satisfaction with the service provided' was considered relevant by most experts; one expert found this area less relevant, another expert not relevant. Personal development as output measure includes two areas, namely the acquisition of self-management skills and job (study or training) satisfaction. Nine experts, versus two with doubts, agree upon the latter. The acquisition of self-management skills is found less relevant by 4 of the 10 respondents. The latter result is rather surprising since this is becoming a major political issue in Europe.

The policy related outputs, % of users of services obtaining a (new) job, % of users of services commencing ed/training programme and % of users completing ed/training programme, are seen as relevant by the majority of the experts. The same goes for the topic time and money available for guidance. Time reserved for guidance in task description of personnel and expenditure on guidance material are seen as relevant by respectively 10 and 9 of the respondents. Expenditure on hiring professionals or agencies is regarded as a little less relevant, with only six positive reactions.

The content of services, including all four aspects (time per user, focus, activities and means) gets a positive response from most respondents. The same goes for the quality assurance areas (the availability of data on: the quality of the management of the service; the quality of delivery of the service; monitoring and inspection; and user feedback).

Even more consensus consists on the relevance of financial means as an indicator for guidance. Only one expert judges it less relevant, seven find it relevant and three extremely relevant.

Two experts find the attention that is paid to guidance in policy making (the amount of legislation, measures and initiatives) irrelevant as an indicator, six find it extremely relevant and three find it relevant.

It is on the last topic concerning coherence that opinion was most divided. For both subjects 5 experts think it is less or not relevant against 6 who think it is relevant or extremely relevant. This is surprising since in a field such as guidance where a lot of different parties are involved, cooperation between the players and unity of policy seems an important issue. The experts from the ministries tend to give more positive answers to this question than the other experts. The expected difficulty of operationalising this area might be considered an explanation for the relatively negative score. The first area concerning coherence (extent of coherence between national policy and the policies of the 5 different types of providers) of indicators has a vague description. The second area (the number of cross-sectoral co-ordination bodies and conferences or forum discussions on guidance) is described in a more concrete way, but might be too far from the core of the problem.

4.6. Availability of data

As expected, the responses showed that little data is available. Table 8 in appendix 2 shows all responses given. Coverage is the only topic for which all 9 respondents indicate the presence of data on national level for their countries. Eight experts indicate that for their countries coverage can be broken down by age, level of education and gender. For two other areas the majority of countries indicate that data are available on this topic: 1) the duration of training of specialised staff and 2) financial resources allocated to guidance (by ministries). Six experts state that data for these areas is available in their country.

For all other topics at least 1 but mostly 4 to 6 respondents indicate that in their country no data on this topic are available. For the areas for which most or all countries have data available, these data do not always cover all types of providers (education/training institutes, enterprises, public employment services/agencies, specialised organisations/centres, community / welfare organisation). Table 4 shows for which providers data are available for the three areas for which most or all countries have data, what the data sources are and what the frequency of the data collection is.

Table 4:

Proposed Areas for Indicators	Data available?			Source	Frequency of data collection
	yes	types of providers *	no		
Coverage					
Cyprus	x	1			Every year
Denmark	x	1 3 4		Production statistics at a aggregate level	Currently
Germany	x	3 4		Statistics Bundesagentur f. Arbeit / Reha institutions	Yearly/monthly
Greece	x				
France	x	1 3			
Hungary	x	3			
Spain	x	1 3		Ministerio Educ INEM	Annual
UK	x	3 4 5		IAGPd ESF funded projects; Jobcentre plus, learndirect, Connexions	Submitted quarterly
Austria	x	?			
Duration (in months) of specialised guidance training of staff					
Cyprus	x	1			
Denmark	x	1 3 4		Known by responsible authority	
Germany				Less or partly	
Greece	x	?			
France	x	1 3			
Hungary		4	x		
Spain			x		

Proposed Areas for Indicators	Data available?		no	Source	Frequency of data collection
	yes	types of providers *			
UK	x	?		Unsure which providers collect which information, but believe for some this is available (*eg* Connexions)	Unsure
Austria	x	1 3			

Financial resources allocated to guidance (by ministries including for contracted out services)					
Cyprus	x	?		Ministry of Education and Culture	
Denmark	x	1 3 4		National budget at a very aggregated level. For units directly under Ministry of Education well known.	Annually
Germany				Partly	
Greece		?	x		
France	x	3			
Hungary			x		
Spain	x	1 3			
UK	x	?		DfES, ESF, DSS	
Austria			x		
Malta	x	?		Financial estimates from the government	Yearly

* 1 = *education/training institutes* (secondary education, general or vocational and higher education), 2 =*enterprises,* 3 = *public employment services/agencies,* 4 =*specialised organisations/centres,* 5 = *community / welfare organisation*

Table 4 shows that most countries that have data, only have data for some of the providers and these are not necessarily the same for all countries. Education/training institutes, public employment services/agencies and specialised organisations/centres are best covered. None of the countries has data about enterprises. Possibly, the approached experts are less familiar with this field. Another explanation might be that enterprises are nationally less strongly organised in comparison with educational institutes and employment agencies. This would imply that, although there is data available at organisational level, the amount of data that is available at the national level is very limited. Data on coverage, however, is collected on a regular basis in most countries. It is collected annually or more frequently.

4.7.   Conclusions

The results about the framework for a typology of providers and provisions show that this framework is a first step in arriving at a basis for comparison between countries. Although it remains unclear to what extent the respondents have interpreted the categories in the same way, the response patterns look promising. On the other hand, some experts criticised the categorisation we proposed. In paragraph 3.3 we argued that more research is needed to yield a more precise categorisation.

The results concerning the framework of key issues about lifelong guidance show that this framework covers the most important issues. The most important critical comments concerned our suggestion to exclude output indicators on the organisational and national levels. In our view, the areas for indicators on the individual level will be challenging enough for the next 5 to 10 years. Also, they will probably yield the important information concerning user satisfaction, the competencies they have acquired and the personal outcomes that are politically considered to be important. For the coming decade, managing the measurement of these issues will be challenging enough. Although educational and economical indicators on the national level are available in Europe, we would argue against the use of these as indicators of the output and outcomes of lifelong guidance. Even causal attribution of values on outcome indicators on the individual level to values on input or process indicators on the individual or on higher levels is an ambition that can rarely be made true, even with relatively well developed indicator systems[8]. Outcomes on the national level – such as the number of dropouts from the school system or the number of unemployed people – are influenced by many other factors than by guidance alone. Causal attribution of values on indicators for these outcomes on the national level to values on input or process indicators for guidance would therefore be highly speculative. We would strongly advise against it.

The results about the relevance of the areas for indicators and the availability of data on the national level show that only 'coverage' might be an area for indicators for which data could be made available on the relatively short term (within two or three years). A strategy geared towards the development of a limited number of other indicators probably will be most promising for the mid- and the long term. Financial resources allocated to guidance might be one of these. It is one of indicators for which some of the countries, although not all, collect data. And, although for comparison clarity about which services are considered to be guidance and which are not is necessary, a strict categorisation of providers, services and target groups is less important. We will come back to this issue in the final chapter of this report.

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[8] Probably the best example is the PISA study. Even in this study that is very close to a research study attributing differences in student performance to system, school and classroom conditions has to be done with a lot of caution. Conclusions are usually drawn in terms of associations, or influences, rather than causes or determinants

5.   Possible approaches

5.1.   Introduction

This chapter focuses on possible approaches to further the work on indicators and benchmarks. We began by reviewing the collection of data at national level as described in the 29 European national responses to the career guidance policy reviews undertaken by the OECD, Cedefop and the ETF between 2001 and 2003. We looked in particular at the responses to the section concerning 'the evidence base' and the specific question of 'Criteria for judging benefits'. The results of this analysis are described in paragraph 4.2 and the conclusions that can be drawn about the usefulness of this data to further the indicators and benchmarks approach are presented in paragraph 4.2.1.

We also searched for good examples of practices in the use of indicators or clear-cut evaluation strategies of practice. Paragraph 4.3 describes the good practices approach and the one case that we found which met our criteria. Four other cases do not meet these criteria but still have some relevance for making decisions about the feasibility of the use of indicators. These cases are included in appendix 3. In paragraph 4.3 we draw conclusions.

5.2.   Analysis of data from career guidance policy reviews

For each country we summarised what information is gathered, how it is gathered, which (target) groups this concerns, which providers this concerns and whether the information is gathered systematically or not. Appendix 4 gives an overview of the results of this analysis. In the last columns, our comments are categorised into the 5 aspects mentioned above. For all countries and for all subjects for which information is gathered, at least one, and usually 3 or more, of the following remarks can be made:

(a)   It is **unclear exactly <u>what </u>information is collected**;

(b)   It is **unclear exactly <u>how</u> the information is collected**;

(c)   The **information is only collected for specific target groups**, or it is unclear for which target group the information is collected and there is reason to believe that data are not collected for all target groups

(d)   The **information is only collected for specific providers**, or it is unclear for which providers the information is gathered and there is reason to believe that data are not collected for all providers

(e)   **Information is not systematically collected**, or this is unclear.

Table 5 gives an overview of the topics for which information is gathered according to the national responses to the career guidance policy reviews.

Table 5:   Number of countries that collect information on the listed topics

Information collected on the following topics	N([9])
Outcomes, benefits([10]) and contentment / finding a job, early start of employment, success in recommended branch / share of unemployed finding jobs, starting studies, starting their own business as compared to unemployed without guidance / employment rates graduates / Placement / students' entries to labour market or further studies / type of occupation related to advice in counselling	13
User feedback / user satisfaction / users' evaluation sheets / users' feedback forms	9
People starting training / (after pre-vocational education) / study course drop out / Placement / students' entries to labour market or further studies / training perseverance rate	8
Demand for service([11]) / amount of visits (also: frequency & repetitiveness of visits) / number of people who received services in relation to number of people registered / number of clients who have received services	7
Level of use of services / (over all and broken down) / users' registration data	4
Quality of service, meeting users' demands, services being on time / questionnaires for performed activities (by providers) / usefulness of information, usefulness of services to others	3
Financial demands services / additional resources attracted	2
Application of graduates in particular study fields / Balance on the training market	2
Results	2
Degree of elaboration of users' plans for active solutions/ evaluation of action plans	2
Users getting to know themselves / feeling calm and secure during consultation / climate in the interview	2
Access of internet services	1
Accessibility of service	1
Evaluation questionnaires in schools	1
Percentage of service usage	1
Number of people changing jobs after guidance	1
Vocational integration	1
Number of contacts with the business sector and enterprises	1
Referrals	1
Progression	1

[9] Total N = 29

[10] The activities of lifelong career guidance services are often regarded as mechanisms with the ability of accomplishing more common political goals such as: higher participation in education and training, decrease in drop-out, decrease in "wrong" choices among young people, motivation and preparation of unemployed people. However, Portugal, Finland, Denmark and the UK point out that it is difficult to assess these benefits and outcomes of lifelong career guidance services as so many other factors play a role in influencing an individual's progression.

[11] In one country number of users and demand for services are mentioned as separate criteria.

Information collected on the following topics	N(º)
Destinations of 16 year olds (includes outcomes; training and education)	1
Retention rates (how long person remains in chosen destination)	1
Impact on society	1
Number of failures to make chosen solution work	1
Indicators for the improvement of the work done by employment advisors	1
Satisfaction with training to which client was channelled	1
Amount of information materials produced	1
Formal credentials of counsellors	1
Beneficiaries' satisfaction	1
Degree of security([12])	1
Costs related to outcomes	1

Table 5 shows that 13 out of 29 countries collect information about outcomes or benefits. This seems promising as a starting point for a first attempt to assemble information on EU-level. Further analysis, however, shows that what exact information is gathered and the way in which it is gathered strongly varies. In some countries finding a job or success in the recommended branch is considered relevant, other countries include starting studies. In some countries the success of unemployed people in the labour market is considered relevant. In other countries this is unclear, but probably results are measured for participants in guidance. In some countries finding a job is not enough, they include the match between the type of occupation to advice given in counselling.

Although the second most used criterion for judging benefits – user feedback, used in 9 countries – seems rather straight forward and thus not to include the problems we described for outcomes, we do not know what questions are asked from users. They will probably be asked if they were satisfied with the advice they received. The way in which this is asked from users can make quite a big difference, though.

In addition to the analysis of the material supplied in response to the question 'Criteria for judging benefits' described here, we also made a brief analysis of responses to the questions 'How information and services are used', 'Recent studies' and 'Steps to increase evidence base'. We did not further this analysis, because it yielded the same type of problems discussed above.

([12]) What is probably meant here is the degree to which the user feels secure of himself after having received guidance.

5.2.1. Reflection

From this analysis we conclude that there may be a basis for further investigation of the feasibility of the use of nationally gathered information for providing information at EU-level concerning guidance. Probably the first 4 topics will be the most promising to start with:

- success on the labour market after guidance

- user satisfaction or feedback

- starting and completing training after guidance

- demand for guidance / numbers of users (which is related to 'coverage', see paragraphs 2.3, 3.5 and 3.6).

This further investigation should at least answer the 5 questions with which we analysed the database: what information is collected, how is it collected, for which target groups is it collected, for which providers is it collected and is it collected systematically.

5.3.   Good Practice

In addition to analysing the data from the career guidance policy reviews, we searched for good practices of the use of indicators or clear-cut evaluation strategies of practice. Two groups of experts were asked to provide us with or to refer us to any literature in English, French or German on any cases that meet these criteria, namely members of the European Commission Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance, and a group of researchers known to Cedefop, among whom those who tendered for the present study.

We looked for 1) descriptions of indicators that are used or the evaluation methodology and instruments that are used, 2) the way in which these were used to provide which information to whom and 3) the way in which this provision of information was embedded in the organisation of guidance in this case.

This request yielded five indications of cases of which only one met the criterion of describing a clear-cut evaluation strategy, namely Finland. Paragraph 4.2.1 describes this case. None of the cases met the criterion of the use of indicators. The other four cases are included in Appendix 4. They concern the USA and Canada, Scotland, Switzerland and Denmark. These cases reveal insights concerning the effects of the way in which Lifelong Guidance is organised and the use of a central framework for the organisation and design of Lifelong Guidance. We will come back to this in the concluding paragraph.

5.3.1.   The evaluation of guidance in Finland

In 2002, the National Board of Education conducted an evaluation of guidance services in comprehensive and secondary education in Finland (Numminen & Kasurinen, 2003). The

evaluation focused on the role of guidance in the so called 'transitional stages', i.e. when students are moving 1) from sixth to seventh grade in basic education, 2) from lower secondary education to upper secondary or vocational education and 3) from secondary education to work or further education.

For the evaluation the Board of Education developed a model describing the productivity of education (National Board of Education, 1988). The model was based on documents concerning the goals of guidance in education, the way in which guidance was embedded in the curriculum, educational legislation and other education-related topics. In the evaluation, the following three topics were considered to be central foci of guidance: 1) personal growth and development, 2) study skills, 3) vocational orientation and orientation on further education. Beside these foci the following aspects of guidance were included in the evaluation 4) the availability of study guidance and the correspondence between the need for and provision of educational guidance, 5) study guidance in transitional stages of education and 6) prevention of dropouts.

The evaluation design pays attention to the different perspectives on guidance. Questions are asked to different parties involved in guidance: students/pupils; study counsellors; the principal; the education providers; and the parents.

A web-based tool has been developed, based on the research design explicated above. The tool has two purposes. The first aim is to provide management information for the institute on the quality of the guidance provided. The second aim is to combine the information from all educational institutes in Finland into national data on the provision of educational guidance.

Educational institutes are obliged to evaluate their guidance services annually. Although the institutes are not obliged to use the nationally provided tool, the majority of institutes is expected to use it, since it provides the mandatory information. This way, conditions for obtaining reliable information at the national level are optimized.

For information from the client perspective[13] students are asked questions about the content of the guidance they received, their study skills, their knowledge on the labour market, their plans for further studies, their satisfaction with the services provided and their possibilities of access to guidance services. Parents are asked about issues related to their children and school, namely: the support their children receive from school with study problems, further study options and opportunities, potential worries related to school and the content and functionality of the co-operation between school and parents. The school counsellors answer questions from the provider's perspective. These questions concern the access the students have to guidance and facilities, the extent to which guidance goals are met, co-operation with labour market institutions, professional competencies of practitioners and coherence of guidance

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[13] The information in this section is fully based on the information we received from Mr. R. Vuorinen, member of the European Commission's Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance, and his translation (which he characterises as 'unofficial') of the questionnaires that are used for the evaluation. This summary therefore can only give an impression of the questions asked.

services within the school. Finally principals fill in a questionnaire about guidance facilities in school, coherence of guidance services within the school, co-operation with schools and parents in career guidance and activities to prevent social exclusion.

The separate questionnaires from the parties involved result in an overall barometer for the functionality of guidance services for vocational institutes with the indicators, listed in Table 6.

Table 6:   Indicators used in the Finnish case

Access for guidance
Student/counsellor ratio
The index of necessity of career guidance Student
The access index Student/Counsellor/Principal
The clarity/distinctness of the guidance system in the school S/C/P
The facilities and resources for guidance
The time allocated to career guidance C/P
Physical facilities for career guidance C/P
The tools and materials for career guidance C/P
Funding of career guidance C/P
Other resources (Human Resources) P
The goals and aims of career guidance
Meeting the goals C
Coherence of guidance services within the school
Coherence of guidance services within the school C/P
Individual learning programme
Implementation and realisation of individual learning programmes C/R
Study skills of the students
Study skills S
Ability for further educational and career plans
Ability for further educational and career plans S
Client satisfaction of career guidance services
Client satisfaction of career guidance services S
Prevention of social exclusion
Means to prevent social exclusion P

The instrument has been tested on reliability. The reliability of most questionnaires ranges between acceptable and good (Cronbach's alpha's between .65 and .90).

5.3.2.   Reflection

The developed tool seems flexible and providing crucial information. The fact that most schools in Finland use the tool shows that it helps providing information that is considered relevant to the schools. Much about the approach is still not known, though. Much more information in English is needed to get a full picture and to evaluate the possibilities for further use in other countries or on European level.

5.4. Conclusions

In our view, the case of Finland shows a flexible approach to evaluate the provision of guidance in the educational system. The management tool provides data on both local and national level that is not too directly related to the system of guidance. We want to stress, though, that there is far too little information available about this practice to draw far-reaching conclusions about it. Further study is needed. Some of the cases described in the Appendix 4 show the advantages of a systematic approach to guidance systems for measurement and to comparison. Denmark's example on the other hand clearly shows that a possibly good practice – informal guidance at the workplace – creates clear difficulties for the measurement of crucial indicative factors in guidance. Further analysis of the case of Finland should provide information about the feasibility of this approach in such structured and less structured settings.

The data from the career guidance policy reviews show that a lot of countries collect data about the benefits of lifelong career guidance. However, there is a lack of clarity about the comparability of these data collections between countries. It is not clear if the data collected in countries covers the same information, and it is not clear if the data itself is the same (the way in which the data is collected). Moreover, there is no information available on the quality of the data collected in the different countries.

Nevertheless, data is collected in most countries. It would be worthwhile to investigate to a greater extent what information is gathered, how it is gathered, about whom and what the quality of the data is. This will provide a better insight into what is really available and comparable and what steps should be taken to, in the end, provide information at European level. For the short term, some topics are more suitable to make a start with than others. User satisfaction is one of those topics. This topic could provide a starting-point for a more thorough investigation. This investigation should include the comparability between countries and the possibilities for (further) development in all Member States.

6.   Conclusions and recommendations

One of the first important results of this study is reported in the introduction of the interim report, namely the fact that, although many countries do collect some data on guidance, we did not find any actual indicators[14] and benchmarks in use either at the European or at the national level. This result forced us to tone down the aim of this study. The available literature did not, as we planned in advance, enable us to directly propose a set of indicators and benchmarks from it. We therefore limited ourselves to developing a model of key issues in lifelong guidance, based upon which we were able to propose areas of possible indicators.

Neither the good practices nor the information on the availability of data in the EU and in the various individual countries supported the idea that much is ready for immediate use as an indicator or benchmark in the short term. The good practice and the analysis of the data collection at national level show that in various contexts data are assembled and things are being measured but the comparability is at best not clear. The information about the availability of data shows that data is available for a limited number of key issues.

The main conclusion therefore is that at this moment, although some of the reported approaches look promising, there are no easy or quick answers to the need for indicators and benchmarks in lifelong guidance, not to mention for the development of a coherent set of indicators that covers the field.

Three crucial problems for the development of a strategy that will produce a coherent set of indicators and benchmarks will be discussed here:

(a) The variation of the content, the organisation and practice between the various countries which poses a challenge for the comparison of guidance between these countries;

(b) The limited number of issues for which data is available, either on a European or on a national scale;

(c) Much of what is called lifelong guidance is highly integrated in other work, e.g. teaching or HRD. This complicates the measurement of inputs and processes in and outputs and outcomes of lifelong guidance.

Below, we will work out these issues further in order to suggest solutions and a first strategy for the development of a set of indicators and benchmarks.

Chapter 2 of the interim report discusses the differences of the content of guidance between the EU countries and the varying ways in which lifelong guidance is organised in each of these countries. This has led to the suggested framework for a typology of providers and provisions. Chapter 4 of this report shows that this framework can be considered to be a start for the development of a more fine-grained descriptive framework. However, parts of the categorisation we suggested were criticised by the respondents. The building of such a

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[14]   See definition of indicators and benchmarks attached in appendix 1 of this final report.

framework needs further work that takes into account the basic differences between the various countries. This further development of such a framework is important to be able to make any comparison at all. We will come back to this further on in this chapter.

The availability of data is limited. Chapter 3 shows that at the national level in the countries that have responded to the questionnaire, data can probably be provided about one issue, namely:

- Coverage, both general and broken down by age, level of education and gender.

Chapter 3 also shows that for the larger part of the responding counties data can probably be provided about:

- Financial resources allocated to guidance (by ministries, and including funding for contracted out services);

- Duration of specialised guidance training of staff.

The invitation to tender for this study mentions the proposals put forward in the Staff Working Paper, which accompanied the Commission's Lifelong Learning Communication of 2001. In this paper it is suggested that questions are added to the Adult Education Survey on information, advice and career guidance (IAG) concerning reasons for using services, use of different types of services, reasons for not accessing services and the level of satisfaction from those who used services. If these questions were to be added to the Adult Education Survey on the European level, data could possibly be made available on the issues of:

- Coverage

- The level of user satisfaction with the service provided

These data could be available from 2006 or, for some countries, from 2008.

Also, data on Public Employment Services on expenditure on information services and individual case management including guidance and job search activities could be available in the Labour Market Policy Database. EU countries are expected to progressively provide data for this database from 2004 on. This information concerns only part of the expenditure on guidance, but it gives some insight into the issue of the

- Financial means allocated to guidance (although limited to the target group of the unemployed).

Chapter 4 shows that in some member states user satisfaction is one of the topics about which information is gathered and for which it is less unclear than for many other topics what information is gathered, how it is gathered, from whom and what the quality of the data is.

Based on this information we suggest that a very limited number of areas for indicators is chosen for further investigation. Based on the list of issues for which data seem to be available, we recommend starting this further investigation on the issues of coverage, financial resources and user satisfaction. Coverage seems to be the most promising of these. When making this suggestion we have to further explore the importance of a descriptive framework

for the comparison of countries on these issues. The comparison of the numbers of users (coverage) and the financial inputs for the field as a whole would at least require clarity on what would be considered to fall under the general category of career guidance. A categorisation framework of providers and provisions would be helpful to understand the possible differences between countries. The possible finding that country A spends more money on guidance than country B would have a different meaning if the money in both countries was spent on the same providers, services and target groups than if it was spent on different providers, services and target groups. Nevertheless, the finding itself remains meaningful under the condition that it is clear what guidance is considered to be (and thus which expenditures could be added up to calculate the total financial inputs in guidance[15]). The same line of reasoning goes for coverage. For all other measures, including user satisfaction, it is much more important or even an absolute necessity to know which providers, services and target groups they concern.

Both of the recommendations above – clarifying which services can be characterised as guidance and which cannot and the development of indicators for coverage and financial means spent on guidance – concern the mid-term.

For the long term we recommend: 1) further study on the typology of providers and provisions and 2) focusing on the development of output indicators. A well-defined typology of providers and provisions is a necessary prerequisite for the further development of a meaningful set of indicators. This typology should make clear to what extent countries are comparable with respect to guidance and to what extent differences in outcomes are related to either differences in the organisation and design of guidance or to differences in inputs and processes.

With respect to the measurement of output, using and standardising user satisfaction forms could be a first step. Besides, instruments are being developed and used for measurement of learning and career management competences (Julien, 1999; Kuijpers, 2003). The next step should be to enable research that provides insight into the questions of usefulness of such instruments or the measurability and comparability of these competences at the European level. These trajectories will be time-consuming and costly, as can be learned from comparable efforts such as PISA and IALS.

Finally, we want to make a remark on causality. If the recommendations we have given above are followed, the causal attribution of values on outcome indicators to values on input or process indicators is an ambition that can rarely be made true. Even in studies that are very close to a research study, like the PISA-study, attributing differences in student performance to system, school and classroom conditions has to be done with a lot of caution. Conclusions in this study are usually drawn in terms of associations, or influences, rather than causes or determinants.

In summary, **we recommend for the mid-term**:

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[15] The fact that lifelong career guidance in some countries is highly integrated with teaching and HRD is an important hindrance that should be handled as well before these calculations would be possible.

- the clarification of which services can be characterised as guidance and which cannot and

- the development of indicators for coverage and financial means spent on guidance.

For the long term we recommend:

- a further study on the typology of providers, services and target groups, and provisions and

- the development of output indicators, such as user satisfaction and learning and career management competences.

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([16]) For full details see also the literature review and appendix III of the interim report.

Appendix 1 Definitions of Indicators and Benchmarks

In general, when considering definitions of the term "indicator" the following characteristics are relevant (cf. Scheerens, 1990).

1. Indicators capture key aspects indicative of the well functioning of a system (e.g. the education system), but only provide an "at a glance profile"; the analogy of the warning lights on the dashboard of a car is often made to illustrate this point (Nuttall, 1989). This analogy also refers to a certain sparseness of indicators and the aspiration to concentrate on a small number of key-aspects.

2. Indicators are quantitative rather than qualitative. This does not imply that only things that can be counted directly are included, or that aspects of the processes in guidance cannot be included. In this report we will use a broad definition of indicators, including scales for measuring competencies, ratings of processes, as well as categorical data. In a nutshell, this means that information expressed in numbers (quantitative) can be used as an indicator and information expressed as narrative (qualitative) cannot.

3. Indicators allow for value judgements and, if not intrinsically evaluative, at least function in an evaluative context. This includes the use of indicators as part of "monitoring", which implies the ongoing information gathering as a basis for management decisions, a reliance on administrative data and a stronger pre-occupation with description than with 'valuing' (Scheerens, Glas and Thomas, 2003, 3).

4. Although we stated the ambition above that indicators reveal a relatively limited key aspect of the functioning of a system in a concise way this does not automatically imply that indicators are composite measures based on a specific analytic formula; they could also be simple variables.

In some applications indicators have an "in-built" evaluative element, namely when norms or standards are specified. Norms or standards specify threshold values on a certain dimension or criterion. An example is a cutting score (succeed/fail) defined on an achievement test. In this example the achievement test is the criterion and the cutting score is the norm. The country average achievement on a certain achievement test could be used as an indicator in an internationally comparative context. When a country uses a specific level on the achievement test as the desired level that the majority of students should reach, this could technically be called a standard, and when used pro-actively a target. If, in an international comparative context, a country would like to compare itself to a specific norm, for example the average score on an achievement test in another "exemplary" country, such a norm is also referred to as a *benchmark*.

Appendix 2 – Indicator Study Questionnaire Results

Table 7:

Proposed Areas for Indicators	Priority of indicator			
	Extremely relevant	Relevant	Less relevant	Not Relevant
Number and characteristics of users				
1. Coverage	6	5		
2. Coverage broken down by				
a. socio-economic status	3	4	4	
b. age	5	5	1	
c. level of education	4	6	1	
d. gender	3	6	2	
e. ethnic group	3	4	4	
3. Coverage of target groups	4	4		1
Qualification of staff				
4. Duration (in months) of specialised guidance training of staff	5	4		2
5. Level of user satisfaction with the service provided	6	3	1	1
Personal development				
6. Learning & career management skills	5	2	3	1
7. Job satisfaction or satisfaction with study or training	3	6	1	1
Policy related outputs				
8. % of users of services obtaining a (new) job	4	4	1	2
9. % of users of services commencing ed/training programme	3	5		2
10. % of users completing ed/training programme	4	3		2
Time and money available for guidance				
11. Time reserved for guidance in task description of personnel	5	5		
12. Expenditure on guidance material	4	5	1	
13. Expenditure on hiring professionals/ agencies	2	4	1	3
Content of services				
14. Average time per user of the service	2	6	2	1
15. Focus of service (problem-solving, learning and career management skills	5	3	2	1
16. Guidance activities used (e.g. information, advice, assessment, counselling, APL, mentoring, work-experience)	5	4	1	1
17. Means used (e.g. telephone, face-to-face, on-line, outreach)	4	6	1	

PROPOSED AREAS FOR INDICATORS	PRIORITY OF INDICATOR			
	EXTREMELY RELEVANT	RELEVANT	LESS RELEVANT	NOT RELEVANT
Quality assurance				
Availability and use of data on:				
18. the quality of the management of the service	3	5	1	
19. the quality of delivery of the service	6	3		
20. monitoring and inspection	2	5	1	1
21. user feedback	4	5		
Financial means				
22. Financial resources allocated to guidance (by ministries including for contracted out services)	3	7	1	
Policy				
23. Attention to guidance in policy making (legislation, measures and initiatives)	6	3	2	
Coherence				
24. Extent of coherence between national policy and the policies of the 5 different types of provider	4	2	4	1
25. Number of cross-sectoral co-ordination bodies and conferences or forum discussions on guidance	3	2	4	1

Table 8:

PROPOSED AREAS FOR INDICATORS	DATA AVAILABLE?	
	YES	NO
Number and characteristics of users		
1. Coverage	9	
2. Coverage broken down by		
a. socio-economic status	4	2
b. age	8	
c. level of education	8	
d. gender	8	1
e. ethnic group	4	1
3. Coverage of target groups	4	2
Qualification of staff		
4. Duration (in months) of specialised guidance training of staff	6	2
5. Level of user satisfaction with the service provided	3	5
Personal development		
6. Learning & career management skills	2	5
7. Job satisfaction or satisfaction with study or training	1	6
Policy related outputs		
8. % of users of services obtaining a (new) job	3	5
9. % of users of services commencing ed/training programme	4	5

10. % of users completing ed/training programme	2	5
Time and money available for guidance		
11. Time reserved for guidance in task description of personnel	4	4
12. Expenditure on guidance material	3	5
13. Expenditure on hiring professionals/ agencies	4	4
Content of services		
14. Average time per user of the service	1	6
15. Focus of service (problem-solving, learning and career management skills	3	4
16. Guidance activities used (e.g. information, advice, assessment, counselling, APL, mentoring, work-experience)	4	3
17. Means used (e.g. telephone, face-to-face, on-line, outreach)	3	3
Quality assurance		
Availability and use of data on:		
18. The quality of the management of the service	2	6
19. The quality of delivery of the service	1	6
20. Monitoring and inspection	2	5
21. User feedback	1	7
Financial means		
22. Financial resources allocated to guidance (by ministries including for contracted out services)	6	3
Policy		
23. Attention to guidance in policy making (legislation, measures and initiatives)	4	4
Coherence		
24. Extent of coherence between national policy and the policies of the 5 different types of provider	2	7
25. Number of cross-sectoral co-ordination bodies and conferences or forum discussions on guidance	2	6

Appendix 3 – Results analysis eKnowVet-database

With the kind permission of the OECD and the ETF, the national responses of 29 European countries to the career guidance policy questionnaire have been incorporated into Cedefop's Knowledge Management System 'eKnowVet' database (www.trainingvillage.gr). This database enables analyses either per country or per theme. The themes are listed below.

Themes eKnowVet database

0901-Overview
0902-Key goals, influences, issues and initiatives
0903-Policy instruments for steering services
0904-The roles of the stakeholders
0905-Target and access
0906-Staffing
0907-Delivery settings
0908-Delivery methods
0909-Career information
0910-Financing
0911-Assuring quality
0912-The evidence base
      091201-How information and services are used
      091202-The establishment of needs
      091203-Criteria for judging benefits
      091204-Recent studies
      091205-Recent initiatives
      091206-Specialisation of research centres
      091207-Usefulness of such centres
      091208-Steps to increase evidence base
0913-Bibliography and References

A quick scan of the contents of the information that is summarised under each theme led to the conclusion that theme 0912 'The evidence base' contains the most relevant information for the purposes of our study. We then identified 091203 'Criteria for judging benefits' as the most promising sub-theme. The results of our analysis of the information we retrieved from the eKnowVet database are shown in the table below. The numbered columns on the right show our comments on the available information, categorised into 5 categories:

(a)   It is unclear what information is exactly collected
(b)   It is unclear how the information is exactly collected
(c)   The information is only collected for specific target groups, or this is unclear for which target groups it is collected
(d)   The information is only collected for specific providers, or this is unclear for which providers it is collected
(e)   Information is not systematically collected, or this is unclear whether the information is collected systematically

Table 9:   Summary of collected information

Country	Summary of collected information	1	2	3	4	5
Austria	• User feedback, sometimes also after a longer period of time • Concrete demand for service, e.g. number of orders of information brochures • Evaluation of access to relevant internet-based services • Evaluation criteria pre-vocational schools: actual rate of students starting vocational training([1]) • Questionings on outcome, benefit and contentment	X	X	X	X	
Czech Republic	• Accessibility of the service • Professional quality of the service • Ability to meet the client's demand • Well timed provision of service • Pupil's admission to the recommended school • Client's success in the recommended branch • Chance to get a job • Early start of employment	X	X		X	X
France	• Level of use of the services: the number of people assisted, broken down in terms of level of education, gender and the number and types of schemes offered			X		
Iceland	• Evaluation questionnaires in schools • User satisfaction	X	X	X	X	X
Lithuania	• Share of unemployed who have found a job as compared to total number of unemployed who have participated in programmes • Share of unemployed who have started studying as compared to total number of unemployed who have participated in programmes • Share of unemployed who have started their own business as compared to total number of unemployed who have participated in programmes • Increasing number of users • Percentage of services usage		X	X	X	

([1])   Causality is doubtful

Country	Summary of collected information	1	2	3	4	5
Norway	• Whether graduates procure relevant employment	X	X	X	X	X
Slovakia	• Number of users • Financial demand of services in projects • Impact on employability of target group • Application of graduates in particular study fields	X	X	X	X	X
Belgium	• Percentage of people finding their first jobs following guidance • Percentage of people changing jobs following guidance • Number of requests for guidance reaching the services		X	X	X	X
Bulgaria	• Satisfaction of the clients with respect to the scope of the services and quality of service provision; • Clients realization on educational qualification and labour markets		X	X	X	X
Germany	• Satisfaction • Benefit (also long-term) • Vocational integration • Training/study course drop-out • Balance on the training market	X	X	X	X	X
Denmark	There is no information or data available about criteria					
Estonia	• Amount of visits • Frequency of visits • Repetitiveness of the visits. • Number of contacts with the business sector and enterprises		X	X	X	
Greece	• Evaluation of results through questionnaire	X	X	X	X	X
Ireland	• Referrals • Progression • Placement of clients		X	X	X	
Luxemburg	There is no information or data available about criteria					
Poland	• Data in reports • Data in client guidance services charts • Number of people who have received counselling services, juxtaposed with the number of registered clients	X	X	X	X	X

Country	Summary of collected information	1	2	3	4	5
Cyprus	There is no information or data available about criteria					
Slovenia	There is no information or data available about criteria					
Spain	• Number of users • Demand for services • Impact on society(^{1}) • User satisfaction rates • Results	X	X	X	X	X
UK	• Destinations of 16 year olds in their areas; • Retention rates: how long does the person remain within their chosen destination? **Targets(^{1}):** • The proportion of 16-year olds obtaining 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C • By 2004, 92% of 16-year olds should obtain 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-G (or equivalent) by including English and Maths GCSE • To increase, by 2004, by 3 percentage points the number of 19-year olds achieving a qualification equivalent to NVQ Level 2 qualification compared to 2002 • For 80% of 16-18 year olds to be in structured learning by 2004 • To reduce school truancies by 2004 by a further 10% from the level achieved in 2002 • To reduce the under-18 conception rate by 50% (2010) and establishing a firm downward trend in the conception rates for the under-16s • Reduction in the % of young people leaving education and training to become NEET (not in education, employment or training) • % Improvement in the level of participation in education, employment and training for care leavers aged 19 • A shared target: 90% of 13-18 year olds are in education, training or employment by March 2004 • Increase in the proportion of 16-19year old mothers in education, training or employment • The proportion of young people, with a drug-related problem, who are referred to specialist support by Connexions • A local target to improve the levels of participation amongst a local priority group		X	X	X	

(^{1}) Causality is doubtful

(^{1}) Causality is doubtful

Country	Summary of collected information	1	2	3	4	5
Finland	• How far plans are worked out by clients regarding active solutions • How often there has been a failure to achieve such an active solution • Students gaining entry to labour market or finding a student place for further studies after completing a qualification or degree		X	X	X	X
Hungary	There is no information or data available about criteria					
Italy	• Users' data registration sheets followed by evaluation sheets • Questionnaires for activities performed • There is an increase in the frequency of evaluation (mostly guidance workers, users, and management group)	X	X	X	X	X
Latvia	• Number of clients who have received the services • Number of newly established regional cabinets • In what extent a consultation helped getting to know yourself • How calm and safe you feel during the consultation • How useful the obtained information about educational establishments is • What clarity you have got about the sphere of your professional activity after the consultation • To your mind how useful such consultations could be to others		X	X	X	X
Malta	• User's feedback forms • Indicators for the improvement of the work done by employment advisors	X	X	X	X	X
Netherlands	• Does the career service provision fit the teaching model in school-related transfers of information, according to the monitors	X	X	X	X	X
Portugal	• The level of satisfaction with training into which a client was channelled • The training perseverance rate • The percentage of those finding employment after training • The degree of job placement after regular recourse to a personal employment plan • The level of client satisfaction with vocational guidance	X	X	X	X	X

Country	Summary of collected information	1	2	3	4	5
Romania	• Number of people counselled, tested, guided etc. • Individually or in groups (school and university students, adults) • Number of counselled persons who found employment • Number of information materials produced (information about professions, brochures, posters, web sites) • Number of surveys, studies, investigations, scientific papers etc. • Additional financial resources attracted • Drafting of promotion materials on the Centre's image, objectives and services • Teaching credentials and scientific degrees obtained by counsellors • Beneficiaries' satisfaction • Efficient use of available resources (working equipment, psychological equipment, ICT, tests, questionnaires) • Involving other potential sources of counselling and guidance (the community, representatives of administrative authorities, employers, trade unions) • Networking • Vocational self-education • Engagement in professional associations in the field		X	X	X	X
Sweden	• Client satisfaction • Degree of security • Climate in the interview • Type of occupation related to advice in counselling • Number of dropouts in different forms of training • Evaluation of action plans • Costs related to outcomes etc.	X		X	X	X

Appendix 4 – Practices of guidance

The request for good practices also yielded descriptions of guidance policy and practice that do not include the use of indicators or benchmarks or evaluation strategies. We include these cases in this appendix because we think they will help arriving at a better understanding of the possibilities and problems that will be encountered when trying to define a set of relevant indicators and benchmarks or an evaluation methodology. We received case descriptions of a guidance practice in Denmark, the organisation of guidance in Scotland and the design of generally accepted guidance systems in Switzerland and in Canada and USA.

Denmark

The Danish Women's trade Union – KAD – organises so-called 'Guidance Corners' (Vejledningshjørner) in several major and medium sized companies to bring adult guidance right into the workplace. These Guidance Corners – 'womanned' by KAD representatives – are considered to be important features in adult guidance in the workplace for low-paid female workers. Adult education options, pamphlets and computerised information is available in these corners, some of which are established in the canteen or resting areas of the plant.

The women and, interestingly, men in some cases, have the opportunity to discuss, ask questions and reflect with the help of dedicated KAD staff and in some cases, shop stewards. Peer guidance is the key concept in these Guidance Corners.

Important lessons to be learnt from this particular initiative are that it matters:

- to get close: IN the workplace, rather than somewhere else, however central
- to personalise guidance: tailored education, individual training, personal counselling
- to give space: guidance over time, with space to reflect
- to involve peers: workplace guidance is powerful among peers and in the actual workplace.

On the other hand, bringing guidance and educational/vocational information to the actual workplace creates its own problems: breaks are often too short to facilitate any in-depth guidance or allow information self-help to take place.

Parallel initiatives involve other partners more directly. An Adult Educational Centre (VUC), for instance, has professionalized the staffing of its Guidance Corner initiative by offering guidance from VUC counsellors and from the public employment service, AF.

Educational Ambassadors (roughly equivalent to Learning Advisors in the UK) are recruited among enthusiastic trade union members, and on a voluntary basis. Their task is to raise the awareness of adult education and training options among their peers through guidance in the workplace, on the shop floor and in the office.

LO (The Confederation of Trade Unions) has issued pamphlets on and supported a network of Educational Ambassadors (Uddannelses-ambassadører), involving both shop stewards and HRD staff in such activities, mostly on a peer guidance basis.

Peer guidance with a focus on group activities, known as 'Guidance Workshops' ('Uddannnelsesværksteder'), involves group guidance activities for women with low formal qualifications (and the ensuing low pay) in order to motivate members in terms of continuing training/education and to identify educational barriers. This development was taken further in a project: 'Knowledge, Vision & Growth' (Viden, Vision & Vækst), in which shop stewards and employers worked together on educational and personal planning, evaluation and implementation in a number of companies. Exercise and reflection booklets developed with EU funding from the Adapt program have supported such initiatives. Obstacles to learning are manifold. Guidance cannot overcome all of these. Moreover, it is a difficult task for peers to implement the concept of peer guidance in practice. Such initiatives need continuous backing and infusing to be successful (Plant, 2004, http://www.gla.ac.uk/wg/pilotdke.htm).

Reflection

This pilot project aims at an informal way of providing guidance to low paid female workers. Plant (2004) particularly stresses the importance of 1) the guidance taking place IN the workplace, 2) a tailored approach for the individual, 3) putting space a higher priority than time and 4) the involvement of peers. Each of these aspects, although important to reach the workers and establish long-term results, leads to difficulties concerning the measurement and evaluation of inputs, processes outputs and contexts. It will be difficult to register the input when the guidance is informally organised, takes place in the work place, and involves peers. In this situation it is unclear how much time is exactly spend on actual guidance and how much on just chatting with a colleague, unless this chatting is considered to be important for creating trust. The individual approach based on tailored education and personal counselling will lead to widely differentiated outputs and outcomes. Putting space before time implies that the determination at what moment results can be expected will be difficult.

Although organising guidance in an informal and flexible way probably will have the advantage of reaching as much workers as possible and help them in a way suits the individuals best, we conclude that it will lead to many difficulties concerning the evaluation of guidance. Measuring the input, not knowing what output to look for and when to look for it, not to mention the causality of treatment and result, are some examples of these evaluation problems.

Scotland

In Scotland, all aspects of career guidance are delivered by Careers Scotland[17]. It is the only public funded organisation providing guidance in Scotland. Prior to it being established, guidance in Scotland was delivered by some 80 separate organisations within Careers Service Companies (CSCs), Education Business Partnerships (EBPs), Local Learning Partnerships (LLPs) and the Adult Guidance Networks (AGNs). A Review Committee concluded that there was considerable overlap of functions, stakeholder interest, organisational arrangements and legal status in relation to these organisations providing guidance. Careers Scotland was established on 1 April 2002. According to Careers Scotland 'this unified approach to guidance through the establishment of a single organisation clarifies roles and responsibilities and ensures greater coherence, consistency and accountability and offers clients a one-stop shop approach to career support services.' They are aligned with the Enterprise Networks. This way the careers guidance aims, i.e. working with individuals and encouraging them to achieve their potential, are combined with the Enterprise Networks wider focus on improving Scotland's standard of living and working with the business community.

The aims of Careers Scotland's are to 1) improve the employability and enterprise skills of the people, 2) increase participation in learning and employment, 3) to be the advocate for the guidance and employability sector and 4) to make access to services easy regardless of age, geography and circumstances.

Target groups are individuals at all ages and stages of career planning, and employers wanting to recruit and maintain a productive workforce. Services consist of information and support, including helping individuals to look at the changing labour market and career options, consider opportunities to learn and to get a job, and find sources of support. Services to employers include pre-selection of candidates, local, regional and national circulation of vacancies, advice about training and qualifications, and interview facilities if required.

Reflection

The co-ordination of services provided by as large a number of organisations as was the case in Scotland – and probably still is the case in many other countries – into one organisation will almost necessarily result in improved coherence, consistency and access of services. There might be a disadvantage in the danger of a more rigid approach and lack of flexibility due to the more centralised approach that will result form bringing all guidance practices in just one organisation.

For evaluation purposes the advantage is clear. The co-ordination into one organisation will make systematic collection of data much easier.

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[17] On our request, Mr. M. Bloom, who works at Careers Scotland, sent us the information presented in this paragraph.

Switzerland

Since a couple of years, Switzerland is using a broadly accepted career development system: CH-Q (www.ch-q.ch; Dungen, Mulders & Pijls, 2004). CH-Q stands for Swiss Qualification Program for Career Development (Schweizerisches Qualificationsprogramm zur Berufslaufbahn). The CH-Q stems from a national educational initiative of the Unions council, in the beginning of the '90s. In line with goals regarding the flexibility of educational programs and equalization of official and non-official competences or learning results, a system for the validation, judgement and accreditation of non-official competencies is developed.

In 1999, the union CH-Q was set up to control the system, to develop the system and to implement the system. The goals of the CH-Q are:

1) The personal development of the individual is the most important principle for career development in education and profession. The starting point is the competence of the individual, the ability to make an aware and realistic use of their capabilities. Knowing one's own competencies and qualifications and having the ability to control them means being capable to develop yourself in this area during the whole lifespan.

2) The validation and accreditation of formally and non-formally acquired competencies in a range of areas. These competences can be acquired in private life, through education and/ or practicing in profession.

CH-Q promotes the individual's awareness of his or her competences, by which a purposeful development and employability is established.

CH-Q uses a Toolbox 'Personal Competence Management':

- Competence Files (Personal Portfolio's)
- Qualification Files
- (Job) Experience dossier

The instrument is meant for the development of self-government, by considering one's own competencies, qualities, talent and strengths. This encourages personal competence management. It is meant for those who want to use it for themselves, emphasizing one's own initiative.

The competence management approach underlying CH-Q stimulates:

- the systematic registration and documentation of capacities, competences and qualifications
- extending of professional and personal competences
- strengthening self-awareness
- goal-directed development and career planning
- validating and accreditation of formal and informal learning

- promoting gender-equality

CH-Q developed instruments for all these purposes, which are put together in the CH-Q toolbox. This integrated approach is valuable, because the different approaches (validation of informal learning, guidance, building employability skills, registration of capacities and competences, etc.) are geared to each other, and complement each other.

Reflection

The highly structured approach and possible national registration makes data collection and evaluation much easier as compared to a situation where various approaches should be taken into account. This leads to the same speculation about the possible down side of this more centralised approach as we made concerning the Scottish case.

Canada and USA

The United States began pioneering work on a career management competency framework in 1988. The result was the *National Career Development Guidelines* that have since been adopted by most U.S. states. Canada began adaptation of the U.S. Guidelines in 1998. The result is Canada's *Blueprint for Life/Work Designs* (www.blueprint4life.ca). The Blueprint identifies core career management competencies with associated performance indicators at four developmental levels across the lifespan. The core competencies are the basis upon which career management programs can be designed. The performance indicators, which are organized by learning stages, are used to measure learning gains and demonstrate program effectiveness. The Blueprint competencies are arranged in three domains:

A. Personal Management

(a) Build and maintain a positive self-image

(b) Interact positively and effectively with others

(c) Change and grow throughout ones' life

B. Learning and Work Exploration

(d) Participate in life-long learning supportive of life/work goals

(e) Locate and effectively use life/work information

(f) Understand the relationship between work and society/economy

C. Life/Work Building

(g) Secure or create and maintain work

(h) Make life/work-enhancing decisions

(i) Maintain balanced life and work roles

(j) Understand the changing nature of life and work roles

(k) Understand, engage in and manage one's own life/work building process

Self-reliance grows out of the acquisition of these skills. The Blueprint recognizes that people at different ages and stages learn differently, and that even young children can learn and appreciate these competencies. In fact, attitudes toward work are formed early in life, so workforce and career management policy must take a developmental perspective. For this reason, the core competencies are defined at four developmental levels:

Level 1: Primary/elementary school

Level 2: Junior high/middle school

Level 3: High school

Level 4: Adult, including post-secondary

To view the entire framework of 44 competencies and nearly 500 performance indicators sorted by developmental levels and learning stages visit http://blueprint4life.ca/competencies.cfm.

This framework can be used by departments of education, labour and workforce development, community services, human resource departments as well as in career management programs in industry. New programs, resources and services are being developed to help more people master these essential career management skills (Jarvis, n.d).

Reflection

The Blueprint is a complex document based on years of focused research and application in both the Unites States and Canada. It allows career practitioners and others to work with a national framework of competencies and proven processes to create comprehensive, effective and measurable life/work development programs and products so all citizens can better plan and manage their lives and work.

The Blueprint framework is valuable for the development of indicators, because it

- enables researchers to determine the extent to which clients/students have acquired competencies addressed by program and product interventions;

- provides a common language across Canada for the outcomes of career development initiatives, at all developmental stages, enabling people moving from one educational institution or agency to another to have their needs addressed seamlessly and with high service quality;

- clarifies of outcomes: The Blueprint's framework enables practitioners (and those who fund them) to be clear about, and measure the outcomes they are achieving;

- it provides consistency: a common language within and between services and products helps Canadians know what they need, and get what they need, as they move from one service or product, agency or organization, or geographic region, to another.

Also important is that the instrument is already used in several countries. Beside the developments that have been made in Canada and the USA on the blueprint, Australia is moving in the direction of development an Australian Blueprint of Career Development adapted from the Canadian and U.S. frameworks. Also in Britain there is starting a debate on whether the UK might move in the same direction.

Conclusions

The organisation of a systematic approach to guidance systems can improve the possibilities to measure and to compare. The cases of Scotland, Switzerland and Canada and the USA show clear national systems concerning guidance and the advantages for the implementation of data collection systems. In Scotland, guidance is coordinated by one organisation. In Switzerland, guidance is structured into one system. The USA and Canada developed guidelines and a blueprint for career management competences, based on which instruments have been developed that enable the measurement of these competences and thus comparing guidance and its effects in various contexts, such as regions, countries, etc.

Denmark's example on the other hand clearly shows that a possibly good practice – informal guidance at the workplace – creates clear difficulties for the measurement of crucial indicative factors in guidance.