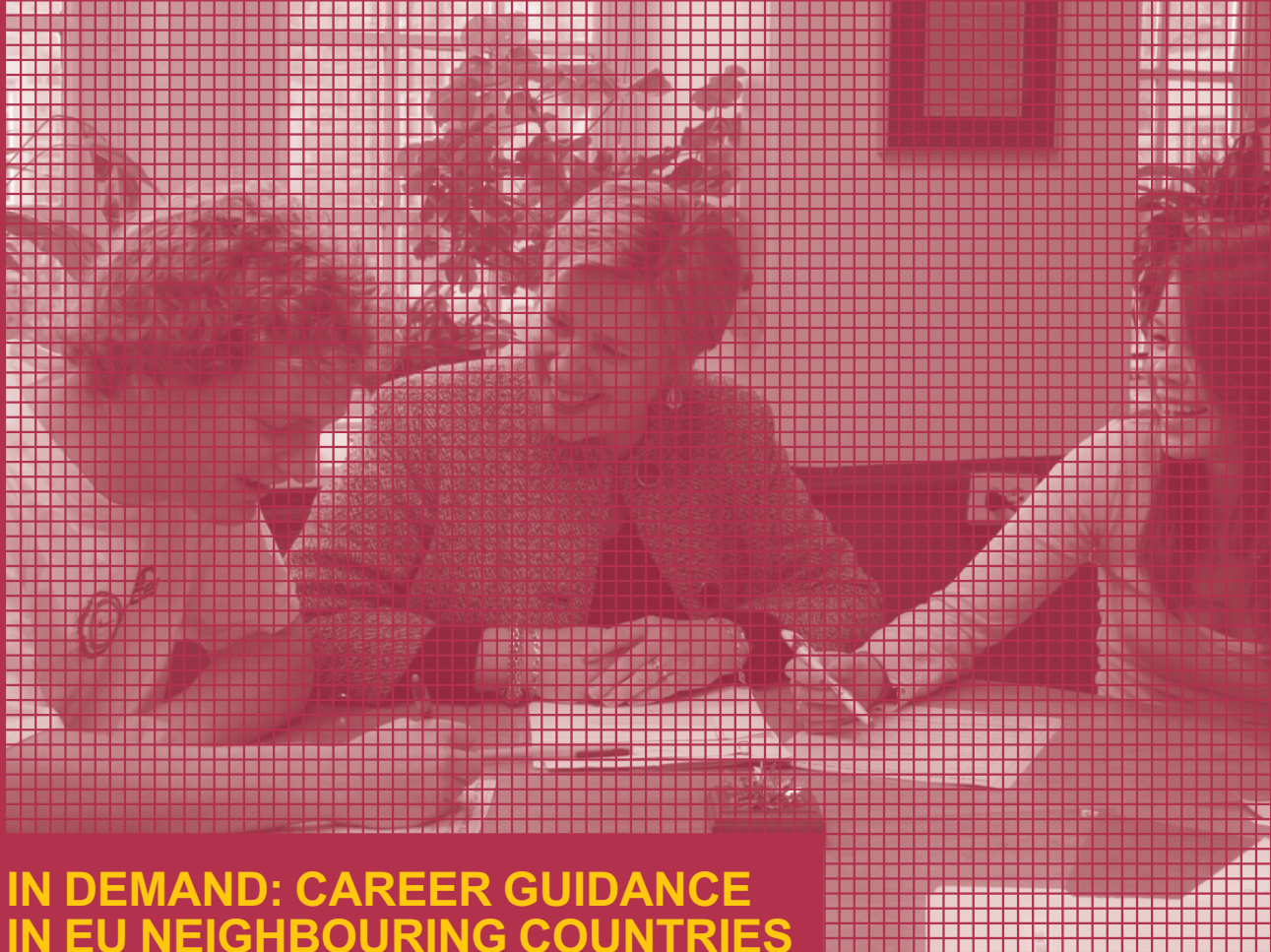




IN DEMAND: CAREER GUIDANCE IN EU NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES



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IN DEMAND: CAREER GUIDANCE IN EU NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

*Helmut Zelloth
European Training Foundation
2009*

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this publication.

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of
the European Communities, 2009.

ISBN: 978-92-9157-567-1

DOI: 10.2816/78201

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Printed in Italy

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Helmut Zelloth, a senior human capital development specialist at the ETF and the author of this report wishes to thank the interlocutors, policymakers and stakeholders in career guidance met during the field visits to Egypt, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Montenegro and Ukraine for their cooperation and provision of information.

The report also benefited from discussions and cooperation with ETF staff, particularly the VET and human capital experts Søren Nielsen, Manfred Wallenborn, Pasi Sahlberg, Eduarda Castel-Branco,

Efka Heder, Vaclav Klenha and the 'very critical friend' of this study, Vincent McBride, the employment experts Ummuhan Bardak and Meri Lorencic, the statistical experts Jens Johansen and Jesús Alquézar, and the ETF country managers Margareta Nikolovska (Albania), Elena Carrero Pérez (Egypt), Evelyn Viertel and Keith Holmes (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Anar Beishembaeva (Georgia), Gérard Mayen (Jordan), Anthony Gribben (Montenegro), Timo Kuusela (Russia and Ukraine), Lida Kita (Kosovo) and Arjen Vos (Turkey).

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report looks at the demand for career guidance services in European Union (EU) neighbouring countries and provides a comparative analysis as well as policy and practical examples of career guidance in a number of selected EU neighbouring countries in different geographical regions¹.

The focus on demand for career guidance distinguishes this publication from previous European Training Foundation (ETF) and other international work in the area of career guidance². The issue of demand for services and provision has been somewhat neglected or underrepresented in similar and previous studies on less developed countries. However, this dimension is of crucial importance, in particular for transition economies and low- and

middle-income countries for which whether career guidance should be a policy priority or an issue at all may be questioned.

The report therefore analyses factors that influence demand for career guidance in the labour market and the economy, in education systems and in the policy climate. It examines the empirical evidence for career guidance demand and then analyses some of the factors that act as barriers to this demand being realised.

The report also describes and analyses existing provision and models of career guidance in EU neighbouring countries, and introduces examples of innovative policies and interesting practices that are being adopted in order to respond to

¹ The regions covered by the report are the Western Balkans, the Mediterranean region and Eastern Europe/former Soviet Union. In terms of EU funding regions, the analysis included countries falling under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (former Phare and CARDS programmes for EU candidate and potential candidate countries) and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (former MEDA programme and part of the Tacis programme). It does not cover the Development Cooperation Instrument region (Far East and Central Asia, the remaining part of the former Tacis instrument).

² Between 2002 and 2006, the ETF commissioned 28 country reports and undertook three major comparative reviews on career guidance, each of them within a different but single region: in 11 acceding and candidate countries (Sultana, 2003), in seven Western Balkan countries and territories (Sweet, 2006) and ten Mediterranean countries and territories (Sultana and Watts, 2007). The only regions the ETF deals with that remain unexplored with regard to career guidance analysis are Central Asia and most of the former Soviet Union.

demand. It concludes with an analysis of the ways in which response to demand can be improved by strategic leadership, and discusses opportunities and constraints in responding to demand for services in the future.

Finally, the report closes with some key policy messages for EU neighbouring countries and the European Commission, which are particularly relevant in the light of the Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies adopted on 21 November 2008, under the French Presidency of the EU. This Resolution also gave a mandate to the ETF to foster the development of lifelong guidance in third countries.

1.1 OBJECTIVES, FOCUS AND METHODOLOGY

The primary and immediate objective of this study is to contribute to international debate and to draw lessons that are of value to EU neighbouring countries. The study also aims to support a long-term objective, namely to foster home-grown career guidance policy development and implementation in all ETF partner countries in conjunction with wider reforms in education, training and labour market systems, within the overall perspective of EU policies and practices.

The analysis covers a sample of nine countries from three different geographical regions: Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Albania, Ukraine, Georgia, Russia, Egypt and Jordan. The methodology used in this study is based on a combination of field policy review and analysis complemented by desk work based on the existing literature and data available in international, ETF and local research. A questionnaire was developed and

administered in field visits to five countries in order to gather focused and comparable information on career guidance policies and provision³. The methodology also utilised some knowledge-sharing and knowledge-building tools with ETF experts, through X-pert sessions, Café Ristretto and Grande Cappuccino meetings⁴. The publication is based on information available up to mid-2008 and on certain earlier statistical and quantitative data.

1.2 STATE-OF-THE-ART DEFINITION AND DISTINCTION FROM OTHER CONCEPTS

The study relies on the international definition of career guidance as covering services (career information, guidance and counselling) intended to assist people of any age and at any point in their lives, to make education, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. This state-of-the-art definition – introduced and reconfirmed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2002a and 2004), the EU (Commission Expert Group, 2002 and Council of the European Union, 2004 and 2008), the World Bank (2004) and rolling International Symposia on Career Development and Public Policy (since 2001) – marks a paradigm shift in the career guidance research and policy-making community (Box 1). This paradigm shift is evident in a number of countries across the globe, particularly Anglo-Saxon countries and EU Member States, although career guidance practice is still lagging somewhat behind the paradigm in most of these countries.

Compared to the previous approach, the new paradigm indicates a change from career guidance interventions at key points in life to a lifelong perspective (lifelong guidance), from a psychological

³ The five countries which were analysed in more depth were Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, Georgia and Egypt. Field visits to these countries took place between June and October 2007 and a validation meeting on the major findings took place in four countries. The questionnaire contained 65 questions in total; however, the number and type of questions used in individual interviews was selective (lower in number) and varied according to the interlocutors or stakeholders. The questionnaire was developed by building on experience with former OECD (2001), World Bank (2003) and ETF (2006) questionnaires on career guidance.

⁴ Most of these knowledge-building and internal quality-enhancement mechanisms were implemented between April and July 2008.

to a pedagogical approach (from testing to tasting the world of work), from external support to career self-management skills and from individual guidance to group and self-help approaches (Watts et al., 2007).

For the sake of analysis it is important to distinguish career guidance from other related concepts and processes, which are different although partly overlapping, such as:

- induction (supporting entrants in managing their transition into a new learning or work environment);
- promotion (attempting to persuade individuals to make particular choices at the expense of others);
- selection (making decisions about individuals);
- placement (matching individuals to specific jobs).

While some of these concepts are primarily designed to serve the interests of opportunity providers (education and training institutions and employers), career guidance by contrast is addressed specifically to the interests of individuals within their social context (Sultana and Watts, 2007). It is concerned with helping individuals to choose between the full range of available opportunities, in relation

to optimally utilising their abilities and addressing their interests and values, and thereby leading to greater fulfilment and satisfaction.

1.3 THE RATIONALE FOR CAREER GUIDANCE

The basic assumption and working hypothesis of the study is that career guidance is, in principle, a good idea and can contribute to the achievements of public policy goals in education, employment and equity. For example, the ways in which career guidance is provided can help to better articulate demand for learning, contribute to enhancing education access and completion and improve the match between labour market supply and demand. Labour economists and labour market policymakers have long recognised the role that career guidance can play in helping to improve labour market efficiency (Ginzberg, 1971; Killeen et al., 1992; Watts, 1996a), for a range of reasons, including the value of information in improving labour market transparency and flexibility, and the higher efficiency of allocation as the result of a better match between individual talents and qualifications on the one hand and, on the other, the skills and qualifications demanded by employers (OECD, 2004).

Box 1: Definition of career guidance

Career guidance refers to services and activities designed to assist individuals of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make education, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers.

Such services can be found in schools, universities and colleges, in training institutions, in public employment services, in the workplace, in the voluntary or community sector and in the private sector. The activities may take place on an individual or group basis and may be face-to-face or at a distance (including help lines and web-based services).

They include career information provision (in print, ICT-based and other forms), assessment and self-assessment tools, counselling interviews, career education programmes (to help individuals develop their self awareness, opportunity awareness and career management skills), taster programmes (to sample options before choosing them), work search programmes and transition services.

Sources: OECD, 2004 and Council of the European Union, 2004

It is widely agreed – even common sense – that ill-informed and ill-thought-through initial education and occupation choices can result not only in individual dissatisfaction and low learning and work productivity, but also in high public and private costs (in terms of people dropping out from education, choosing another field of study or work or postponing transition from school to work). A recent study by a Dutch think tank on the cost efficiency of the education and training system in the Netherlands estimates the cost of wrong choices to amount to several billion euro over time (Stichting De Nationale DenkTank, 2007).

Among international organisations, it was the OECD which addressed career guidance issues for the first time as part of an examination of policy issues related to initial transitions from school to work. It did this in a thematic review on transition to work (OECD, 2000), concluding that well-organised information and guidance is an essential feature of effective transition systems (Sweet, 2001). However, it also noted that information and guidance systems are frequently not well organised in many countries, and have often not been given sufficient priority by those responsible for youth transition policies. A number of OECD publications (e.g. 2001a and 2002b) provided good evidence that human capital plays an increasing role in economic growth in OECD countries. A wider view of human capital includes categories such as career planning, job search and career management skills, which, in turn, have the potential to contribute significantly to national policies for the development of human capital (Watts, 2002).

In the analysis of why career guidance matters for public policy, the OECD (2004) concluded for 14 OECD countries, that career guidance can contribute to three broad categories of public policy goals and issues: learning goals, labour market goals and social equity goals. Whereas within learning goals career guidance is seen as a contributor to the development of human resources, as a way to improve the efficiency of education systems and as a tool to help improve the fit between

education and the labour market, policymakers tend to expect career guidance, under the goals of the labour market, to contribute to a number of labour market objectives, such as helping to prevent or reduce unemployment, improving labour mobility, improving the match between supply and demand, improving labour supply and addressing skill shortages. Finally, and somewhat less frequently, it is expected that career guidance can help to achieve social equity goals, by supporting disadvantaged and marginalised groups and the social integration of migrants and ethnic minorities and by addressing gender equity, for example, by tackling gender segmentation in the labour market and supporting increased female labour force participation.

These theoretical and conceptual arguments in favour of career guidance in more developed countries have been basically confirmed by the World Bank to be applicable also for low- and middle-income countries (Watts and Fretwell, 2004). That career guidance can have a positive impact for low- and middle-income countries in the context of rapidly changing labour markets has also been claimed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2006a).

Empirical evidence in support of these arguments, however, was limited in all studies, in particular for medium-term behavioural outcomes and longer-term impacts of career guidance. This is mainly due to the complexity of factors determining career pathways and decisions over time and also to the absence of longitudinal and multifactorial research on the impact of service provision.

1.4 THE EU POLICY CONTEXT FOR CAREER GUIDANCE

There is plenty of evidence in recent years that career information, guidance and counselling have moved significantly up the policy agenda in EU and OECD countries, and that lifelong guidance has become a buzz phrase in expert forums in the field. This development has been stimulated by

several factors that came together at much the same time: discussions on the emerging knowledge economy, the lifelong learning perspective, a series of EU and international policy reviews on career guidance, and a number of related policy initiatives at the European level (Zelloth et al., 2003).

Starting in 2000, the European Commission has developed a set of policy documents that strongly reflect on different aspects of current policy thinking on career guidance (McCarthy, 2002). In the education sector, the *Memorandum on lifelong learning* and the related Communication identified information, guidance and counselling as a main building block and priority area for further action (European Commission, 2000 and 2001a). Important references to guidance were made in a report on the concrete future objectives of education and training systems in Europe with a view to motivating young people and adults to participate in and to continue learning (European Commission, 2001b). Another Communication on investing efficiently in education and training looked to guidance and counselling services for early prevention strategies capable of reducing mismatches between education and training and the needs of the labour market, increasing completion rates in secondary and higher education and facilitating the transition to work and the return to studies (European Commission, 2003).

The Copenhagen Declaration (2002) on enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training (VET) also aimed to strengthen policies, systems and practices that support information, guidance and counselling in EU Member States at all levels of education, and also training and employment in order to facilitate the occupational and geographical mobility of citizens in Europe. The Maastricht Communiqué (2004), the Helsinki Communiqué (2006) and the Bordeaux Communiqué (2008) all reconfirmed the priorities of the Copenhagen Declaration.

At the same time, social partners discovered the relevance of career guidance. The European social partners

have jointly set information and guidance as one of their four key goals in the implementation of the *Framework of actions for the lifelong development of competencies and qualifications* (adopted in 2002) asserting the principle of shared responsibilities by players.

In the employment sector, career guidance is often viewed as an integral part of active labour market measures, as outlined by the European Employment Strategy and its Guidelines. Issues and concerns raised in the Joint Employment Report and the Joint Statement of the European Public Employment Services concerning their role in preventing and reducing long-term unemployment (2000) opened up significant implications for guidance provision not only for jobseekers and the unemployed but also for the employed and employers in the framework of comprehensive and coherent strategies for lifelong learning. The subsequent Commission Action Plan for skills and mobility noted that occupation mobility and workforce upskilling can be enhanced by better access for workers and employers to information, guidance and counselling services and that such services are largely absent from the workplace itself in most countries (European Commission, 2002).

In 2004, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities commissioned a study on European public employment services covering 28 countries, to gauge the manner and extent to which personalised employment and career guidance services have responded to the widely-adopted goal of implementing a personal service approach.

In the same year, a major milestone in setting the overall scene for career guidance in EU countries – in the wider framework of lifelong learning policies – was the adoption in May 2004, under the Irish Presidency of the EU, of a Council Resolution on guidance throughout life. The ILO also adopted a new recommendation on human resource development which referred to career guidance.

This EU resolution notes that the present policies, systems and practices for guidance in EU Member States do not match the demands of knowledge-based economies and societies. Therefore, the Council of the European Union called for a reform of policies and a rethinking of current practices, at the same time assigning priority to the following issues:

1. lifelong access for citizens to high-quality guidance;
2. refocusing guidance provision to teach citizens learning and career management skills;
3. strengthening of structures for policy and systems development through mechanisms that would involve the appropriate key players (such as ministries, social partners, employment services, guidance practitioners, consumers, parents, youth);
4. development of better quality-assurance mechanisms, especially from a citizen or consumer perspective.

In order to further strengthen career guidance development at both Member State and EU levels, the Council of the European Union adopted on 21 November 2008, under the French Presidency of the EU, a Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies, aiming at reinforcing the implementation of these goals. This resolution gave a mandate to the ETF to foster the development of lifelong guidance in third countries in accordance with four priority areas, namely: (i) encouraging the lifelong acquisition of career management skills; (ii) facilitating access for all citizens to guidance services; (iii) developing quality assurance in guidance provision;

and (iv) encouraging coordination and cooperation among the various national, regional and local stakeholders.

Between 2002 and 2007, a Lifelong Guidance Expert Group set up by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture developed further policies, instruments and tools at European level (for example, a handbook for policymakers, common European reference tools, aims and principles of guidance, key features of lifelong guidance systems) that are now available to EU Member States for review and implementation purposes. In this context and as a follow-up to the Lifelong Guidance Expert Group, a European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network was founded in 2007 with the participation of all 27 EU Member States.

The large stock and critical mass of knowledge and expertise, tools and instruments, networks and policy documents developed by the EU represents a huge resource for Member States which, in principle, could also be utilised by EU neighbouring countries also. These could serve for reflection on their own career guidance structures and policies, but could also be useful for inspiration and for experimenting with and testing new policies and methods with a view to further developing career guidance provision that rises to the new challenges of society. The main challenge is to adapt, elements or models from state-of-the-art policy thinking and practices to the contextual specificities of a country, that fit country's state of development, and that also to anticipate future perspectives or expectations.

2. CAREER GUIDANCE IN EU NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

2

This chapter attempts to identify a number of pull and push factors in career guidance demand, barriers to meeting this demand, and evidential sources and arguments that form the basis of a policy rationale for establishing and developing career guidance in EU neighbouring countries. It tries to link the wider rationale for career guidance as outlined in Chapter 1 to the dimension of demand and to the situation in various EU neighbouring countries or regions with different economic, labour market and sociocultural contexts.

2.1 EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE OF DEMAND FOR CAREER GUIDANCE

The issue of demand for career guidance services in low- and middle-income countries is not well researched and in none of the countries reviewed was a critical mass of empirical evidence identified that was based on research or analysis. For the majority of the countries, but in particular the smaller states (the

former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Georgia), this has to be seen in a wider context in which science and research are largely carried out under modest conditions and with minimum funding (Ministry of Education and Science [Skopje], 2004). Consequently, research into education, training and labour market institutions is very limited. Even in larger countries like Ukraine, with a comparatively well developed research tradition and infrastructure, there is no significant research or analysis of the demand for career guidance. Although an institute within the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences has carried out some applied research on career guidance in the last decade, it has focused mainly on supply, and the impression remains that research results are rather institutionally isolated and not linked to policy-making.

The only country where research on guidance within universities is beginning to emerge is Turkey, with a research centre on human resource management and career

counselling planned for Ankara University's Faculty of Political Sciences (Akkök, 2006). In Russia, the level of needs has occasionally been examined through regional research projects. For example, for the central region, research was conducted into the kind of help students in Grades 9 and 10 expected to receive from the school psychologist; orientation (information on educational institutions, trades, the labour market situation, etc.) was the issue ranked the highest among students, followed by psychological conflicts. A comparison between 2001/02 and 2002/03 showed an increase, from 67% to 73%, in the demand for orientation by students in Grade 10 (Zabrodin, 2003).

A demand-focused survey was undertaken in Montenegro in 2007 by the newly established Centre for Career Information and Professional Counselling. A basic questionnaire that covered a sample of 800 primary school students revealed the strong role and influence of parents, but also showed that around one third of primary education pupils in the last grade were still undecided on their educational progression, with around 30% mentioning a lack of information. The Centre for Career Information and Professional Counselling is planning to further develop its survey instrument and to continue surveying on a regular basis. In Turkey, a recent survey on methods for participatory labour market assessment revealed that one of the most important challenges identified by young people in the transition from school to work was the lack of information about job availability (19% of respondents) and the lack of jobs (25%). Inadequate or irrelevant school preparation was cited by 43% of respondents as the most serious challenge (World Bank, 2007a).

In general, surveys on the needs of clients of public employment services for guidance services seem to be rare. The public employment services in Ukraine occasionally undertake client satisfaction surveys which, however, point more in the direction of quality of service delivery. In Turkey, the public employment service (İŞKUR) has developed web-based questionnaires to evaluate employment and vocational guidance services within the

scope of a project on active labour market measures which, in reality, are rarely applied.

With regard to the impact of career guidance, one of the very few studies that includes counselling and guidance as part of a wider research effort was implemented in the framework of an evaluation of a World Bank project in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 1998/99, in which active labour market measures were assessed for their effectiveness, and where counselling and guidance were ranked among the more effective interventions for the unemployed in terms of finding employment (Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2001).

In a generally rather supply-driven context, it is surprising that in most countries there is not even a regular analysis or evaluation of the career guidance function or the clients of school psychologists and pedagogues (as one of the main delivery agents) in primary and secondary education. The evidence base on which policymakers could draw is very limited and there are indications that the situation in low- and middle-income countries is, in general, better in labour organisations than in educational settings, where even data on usage of services is often difficult to obtain (Watts and Fretwell, 2004). Larger countries like Turkey seem to be an exception, as data exist on the number of students making use of individual and group counselling services (divided into psychological counselling, educational guidance and career guidance) in schools and employment services (Akkök, 2003).

Given the current weak direct empirical evidence on demand for career guidance, potential demand largely needs to be argued and derived indirectly from a number of wider development features, indicators, non-evidential sources or drivers, as well as from belief systems and expectations of experts, stakeholders and policymakers. In this context, the inner logic and development direction of current or planned education and labour market reforms seems to be a key driver of demand for career guidance in EU neighbouring countries.

2.2 EDUCATION AND TRAINING REFORMS AND DEMAND FOR CAREER GUIDANCE

The OECD (2004) stresses that as employment and education policies seek to widen choices and create systems that can respond to varying needs throughout life, career guidance becomes increasingly important for public policy.

With regard to education and training systems, Sultana and Watts (2007) make a distinction between the following four basic features in the continuum of choices:

- situations in which individuals are allocated to particular programmes;
- situations in which they have choices, in principle, but these choices tend to be determined by rigid status hierarchies – i.e., a kind of self-imposed allocation is in operation;
- situations in which there is more genuine choice, but no formal guidance services exist to support such choices – i.e., support for them is left entirely to informal sources;
- situations in which choices exist and are supported by formal guidance services.

The latter two situations are obviously most relevant with a view to providing scope for career guidance. Although at first sight the notion of choice might be assessed as being limited in a number of low- and middle-income countries, looking more closely at recent development features of the education and training systems, an increasing scope for choices can be observed in many countries. Career guidance provision, however, does not yet respond sufficiently or fails to keep pace with wider reform developments that, in principle, trigger increased demand for support services. Service provision in EU neighbouring countries often remains very limited and is hardly available even for young people facing important transitions between educational trajectories or from school to work.

Primary education modernisation and two- and three-tier cycles

Portioning traditional primary education into several phases (cycles) and adapting it better to individual learning needs based on a revised overall curriculum philosophy can substantially stimulate demand for career guidance or career education in the education sector. The growing importance and demand for career guidance could be deduced from currently planned education reforms in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which aims – in parallel with Montenegro – to introduce a new structure with three levels of primary education (3+3+3), adding one additional year of compulsory schooling by making the 0-class (at age six) compulsory (attended currently by around 75% of the age cohort anyway). Amongst the main objectives of the reform are a major revision of curricula and an education which encourages a learning culture and fosters creative learning, problem solving and critical thinking. Issues such as independent study, life management, self-realisation and self-improvement are high on the reform agenda and could be supported by and effectively linked to the concept of career management skills and career education.

Increasing diversity, flexibility and complexity of learning opportunities

Demand and windows of opportunities for career guidance interventions are opened up through reforms and developments in education and training aimed at more flexibility, increased diversity and more complexity of learning opportunities.

In Egypt, a new study plan for technical education was approved in autumn 2007, whose implementation started in the school year 2008/09. It aims to postpone the decision for specialisation in VET from the first to the second year, with only a family of occupations selected in the first year, thus creating the potential for orientation programmes and other guidance activities. It also aims to replace the current system of assigning students to educational tracks (specialties) mainly based on their score in preparatory school.

In general, secondary education elective subject matters have been introduced in Egypt, and as a result, academic counsellors have been appointed to assist students in selecting the academic subjects that would match their career aspirations.

In Ukraine, secondary education has been extended from 11 to 12 years (the first Grade 12 school leavers will graduate in 2013) and a new curricular framework is under preparation, aiming to ensure that studies are more relevant to demand in the economy and in the labour market. Career guidance is likely to be a topic to be added to the policy dialogue and process that started at the end of 2007. In Montenegro, policymakers are thinking about making secondary education compulsory and VET more modularised in the medium term. Choices and optional subjects have already been increased, and 20% of curriculum content is now decided at the local level. All these developments imply an increased demand for guidance. In Georgia, ongoing education reforms have also changed the basic structure of the education system (6+3). After compulsory education, graduates from the three-year basic schools can choose between initial VET (apprenticeship) and general secondary education (Castel-Branco and Glonti, 2007).

In the area of adult education, the National Strategy for the Development of Education 2005-15 in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia refers to increasing opportunities for educational choice. In Ukraine, the Confederation of Employers has started to promote a system of flexible and short-term labour market-oriented vocational training, starting with three- to six-month courses. This newly emerging adult training approach could provide an opportunity to reflect on and integrate career guidance as part of a wider training framework in the country. Career guidance could be a useful public policy mechanism to help people to maintain their employability, as a source of security, within an (increasingly) flexible labour market. In Turkey, the need for career guidance for adults is growing too (around 7 million people – mostly women – are illiterate), but this need has not yet been widely converted into demand (Akkök, 2006).

The drive towards higher education and higher qualifications

Both trends, evident in most of the countries in the study, are generated by technological change and restructuring as well as by social expectations (Egypt and Jordan, for example, are certificate-bound societies), and ensure a potential demand for career guidance.

In Ukraine, the last few years have seen an enormous drive towards higher education and a huge intake of students into the tertiary education system, with mushrooming private universities for those who can afford to pay. In addition, almost 50% of students in public universities are fee-paying students. Some universities have (re)started to establish career centres (which, in fact, are rather more like job placement centres) and there is much scope to enlarge and expand these models and initiatives. In Montenegro, there are indications from a survey of employers of a shift towards greater demand for a more highly educated labour force (30% with post-secondary and tertiary education – although current vacancies show only 18% demand for higher qualifications and 27% for unqualified labour). The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia National Employment Strategy 2010 has set targets for reducing early school leaving and for increasing participation in higher education and adult learning in accordance with EU benchmarks.

Reducing dropout rates and making more efficient use of investment

Preventing wrong choices and reducing or eliminating the number of dropouts at various stages of the education system, with a view to minimising waste or inappropriate use of educational resources, is one of the main contributions of career guidance. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for example, has a comparatively high dropout rate for primary education and at the stage of transition from primary to secondary schools. This pattern reproduces the low educational level of the population. One in two citizens aged over 15 has no or a very low level of education, that is, they are either illiterate

or have incomplete or completed primary education only (Ministry of Education and Science [Skopje], 2004). Also of concern is the number of pupils leaving the education system in Georgia upon completion of compulsory schooling without professional training, some 9% to 12% in the period 2000-04 (ETF, 2005a).

Push factors from the supply side

The establishment of career centres in some vocational schools in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (see Chapter 3) stimulated demand in other vocational schools; by now all 57 schools have established career centres. This may trigger demand from students in gymnasias, often located in the same building as vocational schools. In the long term – and in combination with the new two- or three-tier primary education cycles – this could even place peer pressure on primary education to start or enhance its provision of services. A similar trend may develop in Georgia, if the recent introduction of career managers and consultants in VET centres is implemented successfully.

2.3 LABOUR MARKET DEVELOPMENTS AND DEMAND FOR CAREER GUIDANCE

Based on the inner logic and development features of the economy and labour market systems in the countries referred to in this report, a number of potential push and pull factors in the demand for career guidance have been identified and analysed. Described below are the economic and labour market features present in EU neighbouring countries that can potentially function as drivers of demand for career guidance.

Expanding and fast changing economies

In some countries, there seems to be a direct link between economic growth and development, on the one hand, and, on the

other hand, policy agendas in favour of career guidance. When economies are expanding at a fast pace and creating a demand for labour, the likelihood is higher that career guidance services will find their place on the agenda as part of wider education and labour market support systems that need to react to economic growth.

This is particularly true for Ukraine, where stakeholders and experts argue that the demand for career guidance was much less evident five to ten years ago, due to the non-readiness of the economy and the difficult transition period⁵. Indeed, two major guidance initiatives set up in Ukraine between 1996 and 1998 (see Chapter 3) failed or were put on ice, a response that may at least partly be attributed to economic factors. In recent years, the economy has been growing at rates of more than 6% on average and industry is becoming a dominant sector. An example of the quick pace of change in technology was given by a representative of the employers organisation: some five to seven years ago, construction companies had no idea of the materials and technologies used today.

Similarly, the economy has started to boom in Montenegro in the last four to five years, and career guidance became more prominent in the policy agenda two to three years ago. The recent revival of career guidance in Egypt (which has existed to a limited extent in education since the 1950s) could also partly be accounted for by economic development as well as other factors. However, high economic growth does not necessarily and automatically place career guidance on the policy agenda, as shown by Albania, which, despite high economic growth, has paid little attention to this topic. On the other hand, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, despite rather sluggish economic development in recent years, career guidance has moved up on a (theoretical) policy agenda, although it has not as yet fully taken off in practice.

⁵ A similar observation was made for Bulgaria, a country which meanwhile became member of the EU. Representatives of employer organisations were of the opinion that there was little scope for career guidance some ten years ago due to the huge confusion in the labour market caused by transition (Zelloth et al., 2007).

Labour market mismatches and structural unemployment

All the countries reviewed showed significant mismatches between labour demand and supply as one of the factors responsible for high unemployment rates. This situation also potentially calls for improved and enhanced career guidance, since one of the core functions of career guidance has traditionally been to contribute to a better match between labour supply and demand. The matching dimension also seems to be particularly relevant for transition economies that are heading towards full development as market economies.

According to the Montenegro National Employment Agency, in the first half of 2006, more than 560 occupations were registered that were no longer in demand (representing a surplus in terms of labour force supply), whereas vacancies existed for 330 occupations for which no adequately qualified people were on the register (representing a deficit in terms of labour force supply). Between 2002 and 2004, there were 323 unemployed economists, banking or financing specialists for 458 vacancies, 78 engineers for 242 vacancies, and 29 graduates in different medical fields for 213 vacancies – indicating under-enrolment in scientific and technological fields. Despite the high unemployment rate, the tourism and construction sectors hire between 10 000 and 15 000 seasonal workers every year from other countries (at the beginning of 2006 the public employment services recorded 4 700 unemployed people with occupations from tourism and catering, while employer needs were 5 100).

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia National Employment Strategy 2010 stresses the considerable mismatch between the education system and the skills needed in the labour market, and a recent EU-funded CARDS skills needs analysis confirms this assessment.

In terms of satisfying the needs of its booming economy, Ukraine is currently facing severe labour supply deficiencies and a serious mismatch in terms of supply of skilled and manual workers in almost all sectors. Employer representatives fear that this bottleneck could seriously hamper further economic growth and development. The reasons for this problem seem to be manifold and complex, but also connected with the problem of low wages for skilled and manual workers⁶. A World Bank draft report confirms that as many as 20% of Ukrainian firms see the lack of skills of available workers as a major obstacle to their operation and growth – a percentage that was higher in Ukraine than in any other transition economy in Eastern Europe (Rutkowski, 2007). However, a skills gap seems to exist not only at the bottom of the skills pyramid, but also in highly qualified occupations, despite the continuing strong trend towards higher education. The Ministry of Education has underlined the fact that there is a high demand for certain kinds of engineers at present and that career guidance is most effective when there is a demand for labour. The human resources manager of a multinational (one of the top ten Ukrainian companies) described labour supply in the area of information technology managers and specialists as very competitive and deficient. There is strong competition amongst multinational companies in this sector for a small labour force that is considered qualified enough to do very challenging work. Further evidence comes from the Ukrainian Confederation of Employers which conducted a study (not yet published) on skills mismatches in the labour market; one of the preliminary conclusions refers to the need to set up a system of career guidance in schools and in the entire education system.

In Georgia, the data show that higher education qualifications do not necessarily lead to adequate employment (ETF, 2005a). For example, more than 40% of chemists, architects, engineers and similar are employed in areas unrelated to their

⁶ In none of the countries visited for the review was the problem of low wages for skilled and manual workers stressed the way it was in Ukraine; 'lousily' paid jobs was the term Ukrainian interlocutors often used, a situation which may demotivate young people to enrol in vocational schools. People recognise that it is very difficult to survive with a monthly salary of €150-250 in a capital city as expensive as Kiev, in particular for young migrants from the regions and rural areas who cannot live with their parents/family in Kiev.

2. CAREER GUIDANCE IN EU NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

background, and another 45% are unemployed. The same figures are better but not more encouraging for teachers (24% and 43%) and medical doctors (14% and 38%). In Egypt there is also evidence on mismatches between educational outcomes and market demand. A paradox of education and unemployment exists, with adverse effects on development prospects (Galal, 2002). Unemployment is increasing and is high for workers with intermediate and higher qualifications compared to low skilled workers.

Emphasis on preventive approaches in labour market policy

Active labour market measures and individual approaches to employment services can induce and fuel demand for career guidance services. In Montenegro, following the objectives and stated targets in the national employment strategy and its action plans (for example, an increase in the number of clients, accessibility to information, etc.), it can be expected that the demand for career guidance services will increase in the period 2007-10. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, active labour market measures have traditionally been poorly developed but have gained ground in recent years. An individual approach (in the form of individual action plans) towards the unemployed – as has been in place in Montenegro since 2001 – was introduced in 2007, and guidance and training are considered part of this approach. The National Employment Strategy 2010 explicitly aims to increase participation in active labour market measures, particularly for the long-term unemployed. Demand for guidance results implicitly as part of the wider needs for improved interventions that aim at preventing inflows into long-term unemployment and that can enable unemployed people to make the transition to employment and to re-engage in learning. Egypt, with bilateral support from the Canadian International Development Agency, has started to reform its public employment services, for the first time introducing active measures including guidance, at a pilot level. A paradoxical exception is Georgia, which abolished

public employment services and both active and passive measures for the unemployed in 2006.

Labour market flexibility-security imbalance

In theory, career guidance can have a dual function, with the ability to support both sides of the flexicurity coin – flexibility in careers and jobs and security of employment. According to the ILO (2006b), labour markets in the Western Balkan countries show a significant flexibility-security imbalance as they tend to be overly flexible, with deficiencies on the security side; in other words, people are being pushed out of their formerly secure jobs due to company closures, changes in ownership, downsizing, etc. and the majority of jobs have become increasingly insecure. This also holds true for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and, to a certain extent, Albania. Following the flexicurity logic, this would call for re-balancing through public policy interventions on the security side, such as, for example, activation measures, support to smoother transitions between different labour market statuses and wider access to active labour market measures – all potentially calling for career guidance as part of the wider intervention package. An early paper, referring to the UK and developed economies, came to a similar conclusion with regard to increasingly flexible labour markets (Watts, 1998a). Career guidance is one of the mechanisms that the state can put in place to help people maintain their employability as a source of security.

Due to the instability and high degree of precariousness in labour markets in many transition economies (particularly the case for Georgia, Ukraine, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania), resulting in poor job security and irregular forms of employment, many people are forced to develop lifestyles and survival strategies with multiple employment statuses (ETF, 2007). People become ready to switch between employment, unemployment (including periods of training) and inactivity, and between formal and informal activities, as opportunities

become available. Individuals who need to manage this kind of mobility and non-linear career development and who need to negotiate in the bid to remain employable would require not only more but also better and more flexible career guidance support in identifying pathways in the education system and the labour market.

Career guidance can therefore contribute in terms of addressing and compensating for imbalances by strengthening the security dimension (and so serving social equity goals) and, at the same time, can be used as an intervention on the flexibility side by fostering people's manifold and complex transitions and mobility and thereby contributing to better labour market flexibility and efficiency.

Occupational multiplicity

Recent research into small countries and the specificities of scale argues that both educational and occupational opportunities can be somewhat rare in a restricted and limited education system and labour market (Sultana, 2006); hence the notion of career, in such cases, would be different. The construction of occupational identities includes the phenomenon of occupational multiplicity (a person wearing different occupational hats, with day and evening jobs which could be very different from each other), and this phenomenon requires different approaches to more complex career guidance.

This argument seems to be valid not only for small states such as the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro. In Georgia, for example, it is quite common for people to have two, three or even more jobs at the same time, most of them in the informal economy and often combined with a formal job. An example of anecdotal evidence from a person interviewed in Georgia is as follows: 'He worked in the early morning in a milk production and delivery company, in the late morning part-time in school support services, in the afternoon as a driver and in the evening as a security guard. His former profession under the Soviet Union was director in the area of culture, but after

transition he could not survive on the low salary, in particular since one of his children needed special medical treatment. He is not even thinking about going back to his previous profession and would be satisfied to move into more stable jobs, even two or three in parallel, instead of four.' In Ukraine also, the level of multiple job-holding appears to be high, with around 25% of employed people having more than one job (Borisova et al., 2003).

Social inclusion

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia National Action Plan for Employment – among many other goals – aims to support the inclusion in the labour market, in particular, of those with the greatest difficulties of finding employment. An integrated approach towards social inclusion targeted at groups such as female ethnic Albanians (who have the lowest employment rates) and the Roma population, therefore, could provide scope for enhanced career guidance services. Georgia, for example, has a huge need to improve equity in access and outcomes in the education system, given the disparities that exist, largely linked to family background, ethnic groups and location (Godfrey, 2006).

Push factors from the supply side

The supply-driven introduction of piloted career guidance services, if successful (and even if only one-off initiatives), can have the effect of stimulating and fuelling further demand. For example, the recent establishment of two centres for career information and professional counselling in Montenegro (in Podgorica and Herceg Novi) will probably stimulate higher demand via information provision and awareness raising on the topic, surveys and potential client satisfaction with their services. In Egypt, the combination of involvement in a regional project, policy review and the establishment of a voluntary task force has had a snowball effect, with the topic of career guidance brought to the highest policymaker levels in both the labour and education administrations.

2.4 POLICY-INDUCED DRIVERS OF DEMAND FOR CAREER GUIDANCE

Other non-evidential drivers might steer additional demand for guidance, in some instances even very prominently. These include the drivers described below.

Policy beliefs

Non-evidential beliefs (as well as evidential ones) can be important drivers of demand. For example, it is believed or hoped by policymakers and stakeholders that career guidance contributes to lower unemployment and increased employability, employment and job satisfaction, although empirical evidence is lacking or even questions whether this is true. Career guidance lobbies and pressure groups, even though barely existing or visible in EU neighbouring countries, may play an important role in this context too.

Policy statements and action

When stakeholders and policymakers start to declare that the time is ripe with regard to strengthening career guidance (Ukraine and Montenegro), building a national system (Georgia and Egypt) or undertaking other specific actions (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania), this kind of policy statement and related action can trigger further demand for services. The proclamation and rediscovery of career guidance in the policy agenda confirms, to a certain degree, the (supposedly real) demand for such services. Examples of indicators of increased short- and medium-term demand in Ukraine are a remarkable edict by the deputy prime minister dedicated to career guidance and growing attention being paid to career guidance by the VET department of the Ministry of Education.

EU integration process, and international and bilateral foreign aid policies

The gradually increasing involvement in EU pre-accession processes by candidate countries, such as the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, or

potential candidate countries, such as Montenegro and Albania, functions to a certain extent as a direct driver of policy development in employment and education (for example, Education and Training 2010, the European Employment Strategy and its Guidelines), with the likelihood of the Council Resolutions on lifelong guidance (Council of the European Union, 2004 and 2008) being taken into account sooner rather than later.

To a lesser degree and in a more indirect way this could be true even for Ukraine, depending on the political orientation of the country (pro-Western or otherwise) in the long run. International and bilateral donor support in education and training and the labour market can have a similar function, although there is also the risk of launching donor-driven rather than sustainable development. In general, ties are looser between the EU and the two Mediterranean countries, Egypt and Jordan (through the Barcelona Process) and Russia, the latter characterised by some volatility in its relationships to the EU.

2.5 BARRIERS TO MEETING DEMAND FOR CAREER GUIDANCE

In parallel to the manifold drivers of demand for career guidance in EU neighbouring countries as described above, a number of specific limitations that tend to undermine the potential demand for career guidance services need to be considered. Such factors and barriers for guidance arise from different stages of economic development, the nature of the labour markets, differences in education and training systems and socio-cultural specificities. A few of these barriers are further elaborated below.

Level of economic development

One frequently raised argument in policy discussions on whether career guidance makes sense in less developed countries is that the lower level of economic development would not provide an economic or other rationale for investment and/or that such countries simply could not

afford to finance and maintain career guidance systems. Although plausible to a certain extent, this argument does not fully hold true if confronted with the realities of such education and training systems, which do not always feature economic rationale or efficiency, but rather political compromises (between different views and goals). It also implicitly assumes that career guidance (including career information) is expensive, which is not necessarily true, as different cost effective approaches (for example, career education, self-help and own initiative, technology-based solutions) have demonstrated in more developed countries. Adopting a purely economic and short-sighted standpoint, it might even be argued that public spending in education is excessive or wasteful, and poorer countries would first need to invest more in infrastructure and other basic needs in order to stimulate the economy and job creation.

Nevertheless, it is evident that overall resources (public and private) are much more limited than in EU and OECD countries, and that, in fierce competition for resources, infrastructural and hardware investments tend to come before software. This is partly compensated for by a comparatively high and permanent inflow of funds from international and bilateral donors in the area of education and labour market in nearly all of the countries concerned (in some cases there is even a risk of 'over-donoring'). In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (United States Agency for International Development), Turkey (World Bank) and Montenegro (EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance funding in the pipeline), some of the donor funds for wider education or labour market programmes have also been allocated and/or used for career guidance development and there is still more potential to tap.

Non-functioning or under-developed labour markets

The labour market systems in transition economies and similar are often characterised by a lack of transparency, a significant informal economy and informal

labour market, low levels of formal job creation and limited choices. In addition, labour markets can also be strongly segmented. Ukraine, as one example, has a small primary labour market with highly paid jobs in the financing, banking and real estate sectors and in international companies, and a huge secondary labour market with poorly paid jobs in both the private and public sectors that make it difficult to survive. Labour markets may even be distorted, for example, with some sectors making high profits, in a savagely capitalistic manner, that are not reflected in wages despite a lack of labour. Therefore, a frequent argument is that career guidance, if introduced in such countries, would not be effective, and because it would make no difference, would simply mean a waste of resources. The following issues concerning non-functioning or under-developed labour markets are particularly relevant in this context.

A jobless society?

It is widely known that the job creation rate is minimal in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with almost no new jobs being created in the labour market. Thus, it might be argued that where there are no jobs, interventions such as career guidance are obsolete and investing resources in career guidance is wasted. This position, however, views reality from an overly narrow, simplified and immediate perspective. It fails to take into account the fact that career guidance can also help people to become self-employed, and ignores the long-term aspect and a wider concept of employability (and the potential contribution of career guidance). It also neglects the issue of horizontal and vertical mobility between existing jobs for both young people and adults and the need for educational guidance (part of career guidance by definition). Nevertheless, the non-employment phenomenon and the greater difficulty in forecasting labour market demands in volatile transition economies (despite longer-term converging trends with developed economies) need to be further analysed in regard to their inter-relationship and their impact on the need for guidance.

2. CAREER GUIDANCE IN EU NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

A large informal economy

Since the labour market systems of all the countries under review are characterised by an estimated high level of informal and even underground economic activity – which by definition does not fall within the purview of formal career guidance services – the scope for guidance might be substantially limited. It is also difficult to reach target groups in the informal economy (both by research and interventions). On the other hand, policies are being developed (Georgia) or already in place (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) to foster transitions from the informal to the formal economy. Already beginning to bear fruit, these policies could incorporate a potentially important role for career guidance. But even in a mixed informal-formal economy or formal-informal economy, which is likely to be the case in some of these countries in the mid or long term, young people, in particular, would still need to learn to navigate through such mixed systems in a more reflective and professional way in order to make better and rational decisions that are not regretted.

A non-transparent labour market and lack of labour market information

Even the large and formal part of the labour market is not as transparent for career guidance stakeholders and practitioners compared to those operating within the EU or OECD countries. The life cycle of companies and new enterprises tends to be unpredictable and is much more volatile and short. Since labour market information is very deficient (Georgia, Albania and Egypt) and not always reliable, it may be rather difficult and risky to make career decisions. However, many countries have already started to move in the direction of improving labour market information and often it is more a question of bringing together and complementing currently dispersed data and sources, rather than starting from scratch, as Bardak (2007) argues for the Mediterranean region. In Egypt and Jordan, for example, such labour market information systems and employment observatories are being

developed and a number of other countries have recently embarked on a similar path.

No choices, no guidance?

In societies and systems in which education and labour market choices are more limited, it could be argued, in theory, that there would be little or no demand for career guidance interventions. However, even if, at first sight, tracks seem to be pre-determined, there are always more choices than are initially evident (see the Sultana and Watts continuum of choices in Section 2.2). However, the career guidance rationale does not only depend on the concept of choices. This dimension too needs to be further explored, particularly in the context of transition and lower-income countries.

Dominance of informal guidance

As a result of the large share of the informal economy and survival economy but also because of different sociocultural features (such as the important role of the family and informal networking), labour allocation mechanisms are involved (or even more prevalent) other than those based on merit and performance in terms of accessing interesting, well paid and secure jobs and careers. An earlier ETF study confirms similar features for the Mediterranean region: who you know tends to be more important than what you know (Sultana and Watts, 2007). Connections with and through (wider) family, friends and other non-transparent mechanisms are crucial for managing a career. The widely acknowledged existence of informal guidance, its predominance in many circumstances and the common sense impression that it works, represents a major obstacle to formal guidance provision, where it exists, becoming established and effective and managing to make a real breakthrough.

Even in the shadow education system that is represented in a number of countries, for example, Egypt and Turkey, by an institutional fabric of private tutoring, the private tutor plays an informal guidance role that should not be underestimated.

On the other hand, the fact that informal guidance exists (see more in Chapter 3) could also be interpreted as the existence of a need and a high potential demand for formal and professional guidance services, as formal guidance currently cannot meet the (hidden) demand for different reasons. This argument becomes particularly powerful in connection with the issue below.

The expectations-disappointment gap

In Ukraine, some national experts underlined the fact that the current choices of young people often do not meet labour market needs. At the same time, many young people are disappointed at not obtaining an adequate job or an occupation that meets with their original expectations. The

pendulum of the (possibly natural) tension between state and employer interests (to have qualified labour at low wages), on the one hand, and individual interest on the other (to earn as much as possible) has gone too far towards the individual side in the views of some. At the same time, individual disappointment and dissatisfaction have increased. If this is the case, then this also puts into question the rationality of predominantly informal guidance and its effectiveness for both individuals and the labour market, thus opening up the scope for formal and professional guidance services (and bearing in mind that career guidance always embraces three major vertical dimensions – career information, guidance and counselling – and two horizontal ones – educational guidance and vocational guidance).

3. CAREER GUIDANCE MODELS, PROVISION AND INNOVATION

3

This chapter describes and analyses the types of provision and models of career guidance as identified in EU neighbouring countries. It emphasises the importance and scale of career guidance within each of the sub-sectors of education, training and employment, with references to the modern career guidance paradigm in EU and OECD countries. In the five countries that were analysed in more depth, a number of interesting and innovative examples are highlighted, each with a potential for expansion or for triggering system development in the future. The notion of innovation, however, has to be seen in a relative context. Whereas in EU and OECD countries innovation might be perceived in one way, in a context where career guidance services are rare or do not exist at all, almost every initiative could be seen as innovation.

3.1 INFORMAL AND FORMAL CAREER GUIDANCE

At first sight there appears to be a dual system of career guidance in place in

EU neighbouring countries. On the one hand, all of the countries have formal career guidance provision (only Georgia and Albania are somewhat on the borderline of what could be defined as a formal service), in public employment services, schools, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and some private sector organisations. On the other hand, a significant informal career guidance sector operates in parallel, delivered by peers, the family (mostly parents) and by representatives of the broader community (relatives, friends, private tutors, authorities, successful people, etc.) in which the individual concerned lives. For example, young people develop informal and 'hot' knowledge of possible transition pathways through networks of support (social capital) that link into families, specific peer groups (often based in schools) and area-based influences. Although this is not too dissimilar to EU Member States, it appears to be far more pronounced and more significant in EU neighbouring countries.

Informal guidance

Informal guidance, although not as yet a research topic in these countries, tends to prevail or dominate in the provision of career guidance, but links between the two delivery modes – formal and informal – are not entirely clear in a number of countries. As one local expert in Ukraine formulated it, informal guidance takes the lead and wins in the end.

Anecdotal evidence gained during brief interviews with VET students in Ukraine (to be interpreted with care due to the small sample taken from a single school and a single sector (construction) and not based on in-depth interviews) points in this direction (Box 2) but at the same time questions the effectiveness of existing formal career guidance services⁷. It also places a question mark on whether current services are sufficiently accessible, available and deep to make a difference.

Moreover, informal guidance bears a high risk (if not well complemented by formal guidance) of reproducing social class patterns or the sometimes unfulfilled wishes of close peers (parents, relatives, etc.) instead of contributing to using the untapped potential of human resources or fostering social equity goals. Specific research is needed on these factors and on the turning points that impact on decision making by young people in regard to careers and would also shed more light on the relationship between informal and formal guidance.

As mentioned previously, the large informal sector in all of these countries theoretically poses substantial limitations to the scope of formal career guidance provision. Thus, when shaping formal structures and systems, formal guidance services are challenged by and need to consider the prevailing informal guidance provision.

Formal guidance

Even if limited in many aspects and volatile over time, formal guidance services have been available in all of the studied countries for some time (except for Albania and, in particular, Georgia, where career guidance development was only recently launched).

Some of the countries have a longer tradition, such as Egypt, which established a Productivity and Vocational Training Directorate in the Ministry of Industry in the 1950s, and, with the assistance of the ILO, a Department for Vocational Guidance. Educational guidance offered by school teachers and social workers backed up the diversification of secondary education tracks, and in the 1960s, technical schools attached to the Ministry of Education started offering a one-week orientation programme in each school to familiarise students with specialisations and to assist them in making choices. These promising initiatives, however, were eventually discontinued due to issues related to school capacity, discouraged school staff in an over-enrolled and supply-driven

Box 2: Anecdotal evidence: Who influences decision making?

Responding to the question 'why did you choose this vocational school and specific profession and who was the main influencer in your decision making', none of the ten male students interviewed mentioned career guidance services and almost all students reported that in choosing their profession they followed the advice of their friends, parents or relatives (mostly because they were already working in the same sector (construction) or had some experience with it). Two students mentioned that they learned about their school through advertisements. If asked in more detail whether they had received some services provided by their previous school or employment services, very few students remembered having received any kind of services, and only vaguely so.

Source: Brief interviews with students from Kiev VET School for Construction, September 2007

⁷ When confronted with this anecdotal evidence, practitioners in the employment services were rather surprised as they are convinced of the effectiveness of their interventions.

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education system with missing links to the labour market (Badawi, 2006).

In Turkey, the history of career guidance also dates back to the 1950s, with the establishment of a Testing and Research Bureau in the Ministry of National Education, the launch of guidance programmes in two secondary schools in Ankara and the establishment of Guidance and Research Centres in six cities in 1959 (Akkök and Watts, 2003).

The history of career guidance in Russia dates back even further, to the 1920s. Under the communist regime, however, there was little perceived need for such services. Unemployment officially did not exist, and people were largely allocated to their roles by selective processes (Zabrodin, 2003). In Ukraine, the legacy of Soviet times has meant that there are some historical similarities with Russia in the career guidance policy and system (mainly the traditional psychological approach), but since 1991, Ukraine has followed its home-grown career guidance development route, with little or no interaction with Russia and other neighbouring and EU countries.

The first career guidance services in Montenegro (and, with some delay, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) date back more than 25 years, to the era of the former Yugoslavia and the framework of public employment services established at that time (unemployment was officially recognised in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia).

Terminology

The predominant local term used in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for activities and services defined as career guidance in EU and OECD countries is *profesionalna orientacija*. The same term existed under the former Yugoslavia, but with a different meaning and context. The contemporary meaning of professional orientation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia embraces – at least at conceptual level –

the lifelong dimension as emphasised by the Council Resolutions of 2004 and 2008, stressing the aspects of a process that starts in early childhood and continues throughout life. It sees professional life as a chain of choices and decisions, in which the counsellor has to accompany or assist the individual at key moments in knowing him/herself plus the environment and conditions that are important in deciding about a future profession⁸. Recently, the concept of career has started to enter the official language in parts of the education world in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This is mainly due to a donor project funded and implemented by the United States Agency for International Development, which introduced career centres in all vocational schools between 2005 and 2007. This term, directly translated to *centra za karijeru*, has started to be widely used in vocational schools. Both terms and concepts co-exist and it can be expected that with new generations of students and teachers, the concept of career guidance will gain further ground.

In Montenegro, the terminology in the local language differentiates between three dimensions, namely career information (*profesionalnim informisanjem*), counselling (*profesionalnim savjetovanjem*) and selection (*selekcija*). The local term used for career guidance in policy and practice in Ukraine (professional orientation) embraces five dimensions (components), the major ones being career information, counselling and selection. High level policymakers from the employment sector have stressed a preference for keeping the traditional professional orientation rather than introducing the concept of career guidance. The term career (*karijera*) – in Ukraine and Russia – may still have some historical connection with Soviet times, where it was linked with individualism and regarded as a social vice.

With regard to Arabic-speaking Mediterranean countries, Sultana and Watts (2007) noted that there is no single Arabic word that comprehensively reflects the notions of career and career guidance.

⁸ This underlying concept is evident from the 2003 former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia draft model for professional counselling and mediation for employment, developed within the framework of the EU CARDS VET II project in November 2003.

For Egypt, Badawi (2006) has proposed *maseerat al hayat* (life passageway), which can be combined with other relevant words to form career guidance (*al-tawjeeh li maseerat al-hayat*), but others consider this to be too long and broad, and that perhaps a new word or term needs to be coined.

In most countries, the contemporary notion of career guidance is associated with a slightly different focus and notion than professional orientation or vocational guidance. The widespread roots and tradition in regard to the notion of orientation has to be taken into account when developing policies and services. In general both policymakers and practitioners in EU neighbouring countries appear to be barely familiar with the stock of EU policy documents and lifelong guidance instruments.

3.2 CAREER GUIDANCE PROVISION AND INNOVATION IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

Overall, career guidance services (career information, guidance, counselling, work tasting, etc.) provided by the education sector for students in primary, secondary and tertiary education are quite rare, sporadic and relatively limited in all the countries reviewed. Some career guidance interventions occur at a rather late stage of educational progression and mainly at the key exit and entry points of trajectories (for example, in the last school year or semester before completion of primary schooling or graduation from secondary education). Education institutions do not attach great importance to career guidance, and it appears to be more an appendix to something else or driven by the enthusiasm and conviction of a single key delivery agent rather than being part of an integrated approach in its own right.

In Ukraine, for example, career guidance in the framework of the education sector is seen as part of a wider concept of 'upbringing' which includes between five and ten other functions. Such an approach has an impact on available human resources for guidance (school psychologists, pedagogues, class

teachers, subject teachers), which are often split between different tasks and have to cope with a role-overload in providing career guidance in addition to their main tasks. In all of the countries it was difficult to quantify the time dedicated by such staff to guidance, but the impression remained that it ranges from only 0% to 5% on average. Specialised career guidance practitioners or well qualified and trained guidance staff are lacking at all levels of the education system. Institutional responsibility for guidance is often not clear or, in some cases, lies with the deputy director of a school. The work of the delivery agents in guidance is not monitored or evaluated with regard to the career guidance part of their duties. These and other concerns raise serious doubts about whether current services are sufficiently available (both according to existing regulations and policies and to respond to real demand from young people) and, ultimately, effective.

Career education

There is little if any space dedicated in school curricula to some kind of career education. In Egyptian basic education, a subject called practical fields (two hours per week) is part of the education plan and compulsory from Grades 7 to 9. It aims at giving students an insight into fields outside the academic environment and to help them assess their own interest and capabilities and learn about possible work opportunities. However, a shortage of qualified teachers for this subject and the fact that many schools work in two daily shifts usually results in these teaching hours being used for other purposes and academic classes (Badawi, 2006).

In 2005, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Ministry of Education and Science issued an ordinance to schools offering the opportunity to include new subjects such as entrepreneurship and career guidance among free school activities (two hours per week). The extent to which the opportunity has been taken up in secondary and vocational schools is not known as no statistics are available. It is evident, however, that in vocational schools – as a consequence of the career

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centres established in 2006 (Box 3) – some use has been made of this new extra-curricular opportunity. An earlier proposal made in the National Action Plan for Employment 2004-05 (to create posts of career liaison officers at VET schools and universities to act as a link with the labour market) was never realised.

In Albania, as a result of changes in compulsory education and a revision of framework curricula in upper secondary education, a subject called Career Education is to be introduced into the core curricula of gymnasia and vocational schools, starting in the school year 2009/10.

In Ukraine, lessons in a separate subject called Occupations of Today from Grade 5 onwards and continuing to Grade 9 to 11 (and 12 when the new school system becomes operational) may contain some elements of career guidance. In addition, the curricular class teaching hours (one hour per week) can be used for career guidance, but are rarely used for this purpose in practice. As in many other countries, other career guidance activities are offered, such as invitations from universities to learn about their study programmes and invitations from the public employment services. In Ukraine, the latter is more frequent (one to three times per year, depending on the region); these job placement fairs are open to pupils in Grade 9 and above. Staff from the public employment services estimate that more than half the student population is covered by this initiative.

In Russia before the mid-1990s, there was a compulsory course in all schools on choosing a career and preparing for the world of work, but it was discontinued as part of the process of increasing curricular autonomy in schools. Some regions, however, still provide courses of this kind; for example, in the region of Samara, courses on effective behaviour in the labour market are provided in Grades 8 and 11 (on an elective basis). Some career

education elements are also included in social education programmes taught by volunteer teachers for one hour per week, and vocational subjects are included as part of education programmes in all types of schools, starting from Grade 5, although they do not necessarily include career education. In addition, some regions occasionally provide opportunities for students to engage in career investigation, which usually takes the form of visits to workplaces after school hours (Zabrodin, 2003).

Career education in Turkey is probably the most advanced among the EU neighbouring countries, where it is included as part of class guidance programmes in all types of schools, integrated with personal and social education. For all grades of secondary education, compulsory – to prevent the use of these hours for other purposes – class guidance programmes have been introduced in order to ensure congruity between the class/group activities performed by guidance teachers in weekly guidance classes held at secondary education institutions throughout the country. Teacher handbooks were introduced in 2000/01 to guide teachers through in-class activities in Grades 9, 10 and 11, and support is also offered by school guidance counsellors. On average, half the guidance programme and the handbooks cover educational and career guidance topics and activities (Akkök, 2003)⁹. In 2005, the duration of secondary education programmes was increased to four years, and VET and general secondary education programmes were accorded a common base in Grade 9 (an orientation year), allowing for greater flexibility. Furthermore, an information and guidance class has been implemented recently (supported by the EU project entitled Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey) to inform students about the different types of education, occupations and sectors and about working life.

⁹ A new guidance programme was planned to be ready for implementation in 2006/07 but has been delayed. Furthermore, apart from the guidance class included in the timetable for Grade 9, a two-hour period has been allocated to information and guidance, with the aim of providing information regarding higher education, occupations, professions and professional life and to assist students in choosing a profession.

Career guidance in primary and secondary education

In nearly all of the countries, the main delivery model of career guidance in primary and secondary schools is through school psychologists and pedagogical advisers (and, to a lesser extent, sociologists and social workers), who provide career guidance as part of their wider duties. Their core task is, however, to deal with personal, disciplinary and other issues in schools. In Montenegro, although school psychologists and pedagogues have an official career guidance function in their job description, in practice it is often left to the individual initiative and enthusiasm of an adviser or psychologist to offer career guidance¹⁰. In Russia, school psychologists start to provide some information to pupils in Grade 8 about occupations, professional requirements, vocational education and training, the needs of the labour market and the standard of life they can expect from their career choices. Apart from individual interviews, interest and ability tests are used.

An exception is Albania, where 140 psychologists are employed to provide services in schools; their role is largely defined in terms of the psychological support they can offer in relation to emotional health, and expanding their roles to include career guidance had not been considered initially (Sultana, 2005). Recently, however, their role and tasks have been broadened to include career guidance.

In most of the countries, these services are available for secondary rather than primary education students. In some countries, the partial and fragmented services provided by school psychologists and pedagogues are complemented by the activities of other delivery agents, such as the public employment services in Ukraine and Russia. In the former Yugoslav Republic of

Macedonia, for example, employment counsellors occasionally visit secondary schools (the highest grades at the end of the school year) to provide some limited labour market information, individual guidance interviews and testing (the latter in particular is questionable)¹¹.

The only two countries that have introduced or assigned specialised functions to teaching staff, such as education counselling or class guidance, are Egypt and Turkey. In Egypt, in some schools educational counsellors provide support to students in selecting elective subjects, which in turn might influence their faculty choice at later stage. In Turkey, the approach is even broader, using, in combination, class guidance teachers and school guidance counsellors. Already pupils in Grades 1 to 5 have access to guidance services in cooperation with the class teacher, within the framework of the curriculum and the school guidance services operational programme.

With regard to key competences and what is understood as career management skills, again Turkey seems to be closest to the new career guidance paradigm. The new primary education curriculum includes an integrated approach towards guidance, covering nine common skill areas (communication, problem solving, enterprise, etc.) and seven intermediary disciplines (human rights and citizenship, guidance, etc.). The guidance programme for Grades 1 to 12, prepared for implementation in 2006/07, is based on seven developmental competencies, amongst them academic and career development and guidance, society and family, harmony with the school and the environment, etc. (Akkök, 2006).

Opportunities to experiment learning and explore work options before choosing them are rare or do not exist at all in most countries.

¹⁰ Similarly in Serbia. Although not included in this review, it is relevant as Serbia and Montenegro were one state in the period 1991-2006. In Serbia, the regulation was not widely known in schools and once the Ministry of Education staff member who dealt with career guidance retired, there was nobody to take charge of career guidance.

¹¹ The material base of the tests used by employment services in schools is rather outdated. One employment counsellor revealed that the tests and materials were from the former Yugoslavia and more than 20 years old.

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Career guidance in VET and higher education

Career guidance provision tends to be less developed and more absent in the VET and higher education sectors. In Egypt, for example, no formal career guidance is provided in technical schools (even the former orientation week is no longer enforced). A few VET institutes opt to organise psychometric and similar tests on entry for selection purposes – an approach which can be considered quite dubious. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, an EU-funded initiative to establish career guidance and counselling centres in 2000/01 failed to be sustainable (see Box 8). In Russia, orientation in vocational and technical education can be

provided by the assistant principal, class teacher, guidance counsellor or others. Students are guided to fields/branches in Grades 9, 10 and 11 according to the level and type of programmes implemented in VET schools and institutions. Changing branches is now possible in Grade 11.

Notable innovations have recently been launched in Georgia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In the latter, for example, career centres were gradually established in all vocational schools between 2005 and 2007 in the framework of a donor-supported (United States Agency for International Development) project for the secondary education system (Box 3).

Box 3: VET career centres and the Supervised Occupational Experience Programme in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

A United States Agency for International Development-funded project (SEA-Secondary School Activity) included a career development component, aimed at providing students with leadership skills, personal growth and work-based experience, in order to help them be better prepared for employment. This component has been established gradually in all 57 vocational schools in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as a career centre, which is basically a meeting room assigned to students for a few hours per day for the purpose of career development. The donor has provided the essential equipment for the functioning of the centre (including printed and audio/video materials necessary for research and student career development). A VET student organisation (MASSUM) was founded and has the co-ownership of this centre. A school teacher (who can be any subject teacher, but has to undergo some training) is given the additional position of career coordinator in the school. The teachers met showed considerable motivation although they were not paid for this task. Instructional guides and manuals have been developed by local consultants and training is provided in job-searching techniques, CV and interview preparation, interviewing and public speaking.

In most schools, teachers have started to incorporate various materials as supplements to existing curricula, thus avoiding the need for major revisions of the curricula. Strengthening links among schools, companies and other social partners is also one of the objectives. The purpose is to better inform the students about the labour market and provide relevant information and assistance aimed at improved career development.

The SEA project has also initiated a new programme called SOE-Supervised Occupational Experience. Its main goal is to provide students with opportunities for work-based learning directly in industry. The SOE programme consists of planned activities designed to gain hands-on experience and develop skills in specific career areas. One form of SOE, called Exploratory SOE, is designed primarily to help students to become aware of possible careers in specific clusters. Examples of Exploratory SOE activities might include observing workers and becoming familiar with their tasks and responsibilities. Records are kept by the students.

The innovative aspects of this project are its approach to fostering student self-help and initiatives in career development, the partial use of key competences and the experimental and exploratory approach towards the world of work. This model has potential to be extended (it has already expanded to all vocational schools, which was not foreseen at the beginning of the project) to general secondary schools, since many of these are in the same buildings as vocational schools. Ownership is comparatively high, as the centres are run also by the users (student organisations) in cooperation with the career coordinator, who is usually a teacher or school psychologist.

In 2007, Georgia surprisingly introduced career managers and consultants in VET centres (Box 4) in response to a recent law that provides for career guidance services in vocational schools.

In the higher education sector, both Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia do not have career guidance services, although in Montenegro, with less than half a million inhabitants, higher education institutions (by now, 30 in total) have been mushrooming, with more than 100 programmes developed in recent years. It is recognised that it will not be an easy task for future students to make proper choices and to distinguish between quality and non-quality providers. The AIESEC student association occasionally had career guidance as a topic on their agenda, but not anymore since recently.

In Egypt, a number of private universities, including the American University in Cairo, offer job placement services for their students and guidance services for applicants and newly admitted students.

Box 4: Example of innovation in the Georgian career guidance system

Career consultants and managers in VET centres

The Georgian Ministry of Education decided to introduce career managers and consultants in all newly established VET centres, the number of which will range between 30 and 40, depending on the final results of an ongoing rationalisation process of VET schools. In 2007, the ministry opted for a pragmatic approach by training a number of teachers and young professionals (psychologists) in cooperation with a Georgian NGO (the Foundation for Development of Human Resources). In 2008, the first full-time career consultants (in total there are 11) in VET centres started to deliver a variety of services to students, including selection of students for the VET centres, career information and work experience placements.

These career consultants are also supposed to provide professional diagnostic interventions, group and individual consultations as well as to establish partnerships with local enterprises and business.

The ministry has prepared job descriptions for guidance practitioners in VET centres but implementation still varies very much from one VET centre to another due to the lack of common standards. The learning process for practitioners is still ongoing as strategic objectives are being shaped in parallel. Initial plans by the ministry to provide further training to the career consultants had to be cancelled due to the political instability and war between Georgia and Russia in 2008.

Structural changes were brought with the establishment of a National VET Agency at the end of 2007, which took over responsibilities from the Ministry of Education for VET, coordination with the private sector and career guidance. Currently a VET strategy is under preparation, which will include career guidance.

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Some other universities and colleges organise job fairs and occupation days, to bring students together with potential employers (Sultana and Watts, 2007). In Jordan, the King Abdullah II Fund for Development in collaboration with the Al-Manar project at the National Centre for Human Resources Development has established career counselling centres in 20 public and private universities. Many of the staff, however, are from academic or administrative positions elsewhere in the university, and capacity is currently limited (Mryyan, 2006).

In 2006, Ukraine reintroduced (after an unsuccessful attempt some ten years ago) a career centre at the National Economic University, which, however, is more concerned with the placement of students and graduates. A few other universities in Ukraine – some of them supported by the EU Tempus programme¹² – have launched similar initiatives. There appears to be little interaction between them, partly because competition for students is fierce amongst universities. Georgia has introduced for the first time a career service centre at the Djavakishvili University, focusing on local returning graduates and experienced Georgian experts from Germany. Information and advisory services are being provided in cooperation with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Centre for International Migration and Development.

An exception is Turkey, where all universities are required by law to offer guidance and psychological counselling services and where some universities have career planning centres that include job placement. Many universities also appoint academic staff to act as academic advisers to help students with their course choices. In a few universities, student organisations run career-related activities, including liaison with employers. Students can also use public job-placement services, which include special provision for university students (Akkök, 2006; Sultana and Watts, 2007).

Career information

In a variety of countries, there has been increasing recognition of the importance or even the centrality of career information in the career guidance process, which Grubb (2002a) partly attributes to educational gospel. Jarvis (2003) also views career information in combination with career management skills as key to a great career and a great life.

Most of the EU neighbouring countries reviewed, however, are still facing the double challenge of not yet having reliable and comprehensive labour market information and translating it into user-friendly career information relevant to the different career development stages of young people. The major reason for the weak provision of career information seems to be linked to the lack of reliable labour market information; alternatively, where this information is available, it might not always be readable by users. Another problem related to gaps in information or non-client-friendly publications, is the minimum level of coordination between separate ministries and agencies producing information and statistics (ILO, 2006a).

In Georgia, there is a huge lack of career information. Even simple brochures providing an overview of study opportunities of schools, vocational schools and future VET centres do not exist. Interlocutors mentioned that there were no course books until recently even at universities. Unemployed people do not know where to obtain training or a job since the public employment services were abolished in 2006.

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, for example, the lack of comprehensive career information has led schools to become active in filling this gap (also obtaining a marketing advantage in terms of recruitment), by producing flyers and providing career information as well as paying visits to primary schools.

¹² The project entitled Higher Education and Labour Market for the Environment (HELMET), an integrated component of labour market analysis and modernisation of curricula in the field of environmental engineering and management, supported the establishment of a career advisory centre at the National Academy of Municipal Economy in Kharkiv between 2004 and 2006.

In Montenegro, an umbrella organisation of NGOs has started to develop some career information and the public employment services in cooperation with the VET centre annually produce a brochure entitled *Informator* with information on enrolment, educational opportunities and vocational schools in the country, which is distributed in primary and secondary schools. In Turkey and Ukraine, the public employment services and career counselling centres provide access to career planning files and summaries of professions, occupational information booklets for specific professions, and information on general and regional education and training opportunities.

For low- and middle-income countries with large informal economies, the ILO suggests that career information needs to include information on accessing both the formal and informal labour markets. Apart from traditional information on economic sectors and occupational trends and content, competency demand and learning opportunities, information should also be provided on self-employment opportunities and information for migrating workers (ILO, 2006a).

3.3 CAREER GUIDANCE PROVISION AND INNOVATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET

A main provider of career guidance services in most of the countries reviewed are the public employment services, which started to operate in Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the 1980s, and in Ukraine, Russia and Georgia in the early 1990s, as these countries started to move towards a market economy. In Egypt, on the other hand, even though public employment services have been operational for even longer, employment services are poorly developed, with staff primarily occupied with functions related to the enforcement and compliance of labour legislation¹³.

In Georgia, employment services were completely abolished in 2006.

An example of more advanced employment services is provided by Montenegro, where the most significant changes with regard to career guidance have occurred in the last seven to eight years, when an individual approach to unemployed people was introduced and new working methods – such as interviews, questionnaires and individual employment plans – gained ground. Counsellors feel they have now much more to offer to the unemployed and are proud of the well developed infrastructure and information technology system for which its engineers even received an award.

The public employment services in Montenegro are divided into seven regional employment offices and 14 local labour offices. Career guidance services are offered by the seven regional employment offices, through a psychologist (one in each of the regional offices) and a national coordinator (psychologist) attached to the Montenegro National Employment Agency. Professional orientation advisers also implement professional selection services for employers and, in theory, and according to the mandate, also for employees.

Figure 1 shows the sequence of steps usually followed by an unemployed person and the stages where career information and guidance or counselling comes in.

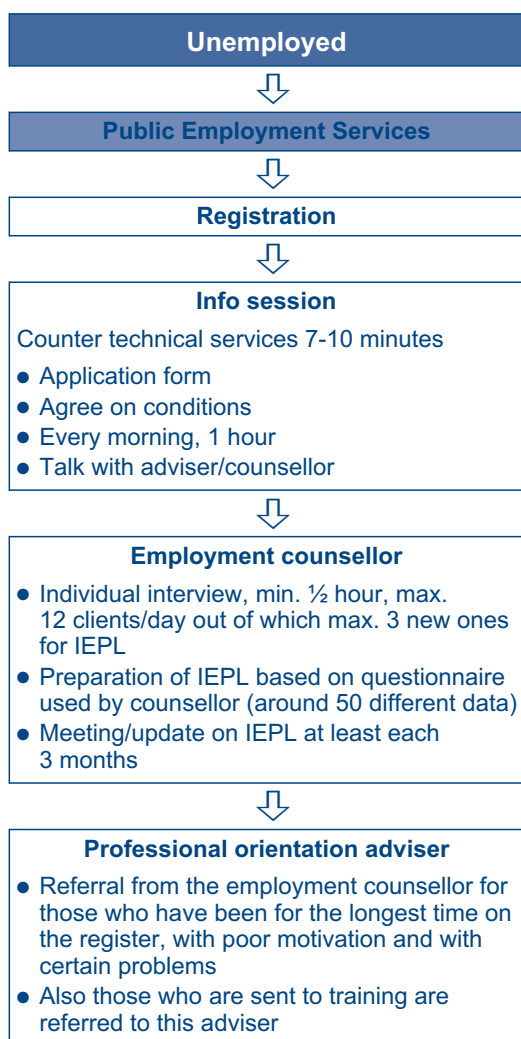
The approach of the Montenegro public employment services towards clients is differentiated and based on a certain tiering of services. Public employment service clients are classified in three categories, namely:

1. those considered as immediately employable (with occupations required in the labour market, typically aged 20-40 with some exceptions);
2. those who are employable under certain conditions;

¹³ A donor-funded project entitled Egyptian Labour Market Service Reform for the modernisation of public employment service offices (2005-07) initially also had on its radar screen the development of tools for employment counselling, such as an electronic career handbook. However, this plan was abandoned due to low computer literacy, poor equipment and the non-availability of credible psychometric tests valid for the Arab culture (Koeltz, 2007).

3. those for whom it is difficult to find employment (people with disabilities and with health and alcohol problems, Roma, etc.) and who need more intensive counselling.

Figure 1: Stages in career guidance in Montenegro public employment services



IEPL: individual employment plan
Source: Field visit, ETF, July 2007

Capacities to deal with the last group are somewhat limited, as better and more intensive special counselling and support over longer periods would be necessary (taking into account and responding to the high share of long-term unemployment).

Compared to Montenegro and other countries, the approach of the Ukraine public employment services tends to be more complemented by methods based on self-help and career information as

opposed to individual orientation (Figure 2). The employment offices in Ukraine have introduced new technologies (for example, touch-screen) and methodologies (for example, self-help facilities) and there is a standard approach applied in all the labour offices in the country to ensure they follow the same steps in dealing with career guidance. In theory, all unemployed people have access to some kind of career guidance services, whether self-help career information (with the assistance of a specialist) or more in-depth counselling and diagnostic interventions aimed at providing recommendations on choosing a profession or training pathway. A wide range of computer-based psychological tests (on interests, abilities and personality, and including self-tests) is available for those who wish to take them or who are referred to the career counsellor, who is usually a psychologist.

Activities related to schools (visits to schools, testing of pupils, etc.) and other career information represent an important task in the public employment services in both Ukraine (several career fairs each year in different regions) and Montenegro (annual production of a career information brochure entitled *Informator*). Montenegro, however, tends to concentrate, specialise and outsource this function in a separate centre, a model based on the public employment services (Box 5).

In 2007, a special Centre for Information and Professional Counselling was established as an organisational unit within the Montenegro National Employment Agency. The centre aims to work in close partnership with key stakeholders in career guidance and to establish a number of local centres. It is staffed with two people from the National Employment Agency – one psychologist and one career manager or information technology and information specialist (see Box 5).

In this new model, a number of innovative aspects have been introduced, such as the philosophy of a one-stop-shop for all citizens in the area of career guidance, a methodological function to support guidance practitioners and the aim to examine and analyse service demand and supply issues.

Figure 2: Stages in career guidance in Ukraine public employment services*

* Example of one local office in Kiev

Source: Field visit, ETF, September 2007

This model is also remarkable in the sense that it was an autonomous and home-grown development rather than a donor-driven process (see Chapter 5). It therefore has high potential to grow and expand, particularly as it is institutionally strongly backed by the public employment services and well recognised by other stakeholders in the country who do not have their own capacity for developing and providing career guidance.

However, some teething difficulties in terms of efficiency and conceptual issues became evident during the field visit. It appeared that a direct and formal link between the Centre for Information and Professional Counselling and the service stages of the public employment services, such as, for example, the individual employment plan cycle (through possible direct selection and referral from employment counsellors to visit the centre and vice versa), has not yet been established. However, it is envisaged that clients from the category of those considered as immediately employable will be able to contact the centre directly.

In 1994, Ukraine established a similar system of career and professional guidance centres distributed throughout the country and based on regional employment offices. Four years later, however, these centres were abolished due to changes in the government and perhaps other reasons which were not entirely clear to the interlocutors met during the field visit. These centres offered information on the labour market to a wider public and very detailed information on specific occupations. Professional selection was done only for 30 occupations (for example, drivers) in accordance with a special decree. The centres were also supposed to prepare and train staff to work in this sector. The basic philosophy was that any person could come to the centre (not just unemployed people), including those seeking second employment. The centres also aimed to cater for the information or orientation needs of school pupils. In 2002/03, services for students were reintroduced and currently there are discussions about reintroducing the whole concept of such centres again.

An interesting example of innovation in career guidance was introduced in Georgia in 2007 with donor support from the Czech Republic and Poland and the International Organisation for Migration (Box 6).

The pilot Job Counselling and Referral Centre aims to support labour market integration and social inclusion goals. The professional cadre of the centre is composed of a mix of labour market and career guidance specialists (labour economists, sociologists and psychologists)

Box 5: Centres for information and professional counselling in Montenegro

The Centre for Information and Professional Counselling was established in February 2007 at the initiative of the Montenegro National Employment Agency and the Local Employment Bureau in Podgorica, exclusively with national funds and to a certain extent modelled on the Slovenian example. So far it is a home-grown and not donor-driven process. Its basic idea is to introduce a one-stop-shop with all information available from one place, based on a strong career information function, in particular for young people who need information on education and training possibilities and employment requirements for specific occupations, and on the compatibility of their characteristics and abilities with those requirements.

Although the main target group is young people (students and the unemployed), the centre aims also to cater for all citizens in Montenegro (unemployed, employed and employers) with regard to creating quality services for career information and advice, but also counselling and selection.

It also aims to establish a light methodological function to support guidance practitioners (employment counsellors, school psychologists) and to undertake surveys and research on demand and supply of guidance. It has established contacts and cooperation with a wide range of key stakeholders in guidance in the country (Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Chamber of Commerce, University of Montenegro, Centre for Development of NGOs, etc.).

There are further plans to expand this model by establishing a number of local centres (another one was founded in Herzeg Novi in 2007 and a third one is under preparation at the Local Employment Bureau of Bar for 2008).

working according to an interdisciplinary approach. The centre also has a certain compensatory function, in that it caters for the unemployed since public employment services do not exist in Georgia.

The role of the private sector in career guidance remains, in general, much more limited in EU neighbouring countries compared to the EU. The reasons for this can be attributed to the relatively small market for commercial and fee-based services (which large parts of the population simply cannot afford) as well as to the weak development of private employment services in general. Whereas in Egypt, Georgia and Turkey, employment services were until recently a public-sector monopoly, private employment offices are already operational in Jordan, with more than 30 employment or recruitment companies providing services to recruit Jordanians to work in the Gulf countries (Mryyan, 2006). However, they usually pay little if any attention to career guidance elements.

3.4 MODELS OF DELIVERY

In an attempt to classify career guidance approaches in EU neighbouring countries and trying to understand and analyse the nature of provision as outlined above, different perspectives can be applied. Apart from the basic distinction between informal provision and formal provision as introduced in Section 3.1, a second distinction can be made – according to the perspective of the prevailing delivery method – between a psychological model, a pedagogical model and a hybrid model. The psychological model largely relies on professional psychologists as key delivery agents (both in schools and public employment services) and on psychological testing (or even test-and-tell) approaches. The pedagogical model is more in line with the new paradigm in career guidance, relying on a variety of delivery agents and stressing pedagogical aspects in the guidance process (for example, work practice placements, learning career management skills, etc.).

Box 6: Job Counselling and Referral Centre in Georgia

The establishment of the Job Counselling and Referral Centre in 2007 in Tbilisi is a pilot action which is planned to be expanded to a network all over Georgia, in particular in regions with high unemployment. Demand for its services seems to be high.

The aim of the centre is to develop and apply efficient job counselling and referral mechanisms to serve the reintegration needs of the Georgian migrants returning voluntarily to their country from various destinations in Europe. Other target groups are potential migrants, as well as the general job-seeking population in Georgia. The centre sees its benefit as a valuable component in the chain of sustainable reintegration, providing the beneficiaries with a better understanding of how to plan their future in their own country.

The pilot centre elaborates methodological materials (printed and electronic versions, training toolkits, CDs, flyers and brochures with information on the centre and on employment and training possibilities). A labour market survey is being conducted on skills required by employers and available training to match those skills. The centre also implements a number of capacity building activities, such as staff training and methodology provision to the VET sector staff of the Ministry of Education and Science.

When the centre is fully operational, the provision of referral services will be piloted to the project beneficiaries in employment and/or self-employment. At a later stage, the centre aims to provide a full range of job counselling services for adults, including professional and personal skill assessment, information on training, retraining and employment opportunities, help in establishing career goals, advice on choosing the right occupation, etc. In the pilot phase, the centre will serve at least 50 beneficiaries in searching or enhancing their job opportunities. Both returning migrants and potential migrants are a priority group to receive career guidance (professional orientation) services and to use the information on existing retraining and employment opportunities.

The centre aims to become a reliable partner of the Georgian government and the International Organisation for Migration. Funding from the Czech Ministry of the Interior through its development cooperation programme and from the Polish government through the International Polish Aid Programme enables the centre to offer its services free of charge to job seekers and potential employers alike.

The hybrid model can be considered a combination of both, either as a transitional pathway from the psychological model to the pedagogical model or as a relatively stable and traditional system in itself.

The psychological model was identified by Sweet (2006) as the most common model in the Western Balkans, which includes three countries in this study (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania). This model, however, appears to be predominant also in a number of the other EU neighbouring countries studied in this report, particularly in the two larger Eastern European

countries (Ukraine and Russia), with a long-standing historical psychological tradition and powerful associations in this field, with a spin-off effect on the field of career guidance. To some extent, this is true also for the two Mediterranean studied countries (Egypt and Jordan).

In some countries the psychological model is present in one sector (either education or employment) but not in the other, since there is no significant provision. In Egypt, the psychological model is dominant in the employment sector services delivered by the public employment services. In Georgia, the situation is not clear yet, since

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career guidance is at an early stage of conceptualisation and development; a certain attraction to the psychological model, however, has been noted by some actors in the career guidance arena. This seems to confirm the presence of a deeply rooted belief and mindset that only psychologists can properly identify the abilities and interests of people and guide them in the right direction.

Despite the fact that none of the countries yet feature a pedagogical model, elements of a pedagogical approach and an (emerging) hybrid model can be observed in Ukraine and even more so in Turkey, with some attention paid to career education, labour market information and exploration of world-of-work issues. Even in Georgia the draft job profiles of the first key delivery agents in the VET system (career consultants and managers) introduced in 2007/08, indicates a (perhaps unconscious) move in that direction. Similarly Egypt, partly due to a shortage of school psychologists and other resource constraints, now seems to be adopting the pedagogical model in the education sector. Although a few VET institutes still opt to conduct psychometric tests on entry for selection purposes (an approach that is rather questionable), Egypt is currently exploring other delivery methods and agents in the VET sector to provide orientation and support to students in making choices in VET specialisations.

Applying the psychological model in the context of EU neighbouring countries tends to be quite an expensive approach, since the key delivery agents are usually psychologists, whose initial training is comparatively costly and lengthy. Their main delivery mode tends to be individual and based on psychological testing (and telling). As the field visit to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has revealed, since there is no money to update psychological tests and methods, outdated methods and tests are being applied to clients (both unemployed people and students), with potential negative effects on quality, both for clients and for the image of career guidance.

However, there is potential scope to achieve efficiency gains even within the psychological model, for example, by shifting the delivery mode from individuals to group guidance and counselling and by potentially using the competences of psychologists to increasingly develop career management skills in young people. Barriers to such approaches might exist in the traditional model of psychologists and in a lack of clear policy directions in nearly all the countries reviewed.

A pedagogical or hybrid model seems to be less costly and more promising for EU neighbouring countries with greater resource constraints than OECD and EU countries. The range of key delivery agents is generally broader (for example, career information officers, psychologists and others) and the focus tends to be more labour market-oriented than psychologically oriented. These models could potentially also reach a larger group of clients, as opposed to intensive psychological counselling for a selected few.

A third distinction and classification of models can be established from the perspective of institutional arrangements for delivery and related objectives. A few countries have introduced or started to introduce career education and/or curricular principles related to guidance, which might be called the curriculum model of career guidance. The most pronounced example can be found in Turkey, and the most recent developments are taking place in Albania and Kosovo (the latter not included in this study). As outlined in Section 3.2, career guidance in Turkey is included as part of class guidance programmes in all types of schools and integrated with personal and social education. For all secondary education grades, compulsory class guidance programmes have been introduced in order to ensure congruity in terms of class/group activities to be performed by class guidance teachers.

Another model identified in the report could be classified as the career centre model. In some countries this model can be found in

the employment sector (Montenegro, Ukraine and Georgia) and in others (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) in the education sector, either for the sector as a whole or for a specific sub-sector or groups (for example, for migrants). One of the main ideas behind this model seems to be the one-stop-shop philosophy for a certain sector or group of people, with the focus on the three basic career guidance functions of career information, guidance and specialised counselling under one institutional umbrella. The career centre model also may include a methodological function, support for practitioners in their work (through training and materials) and even a small analysis and research function.

However, the magnitude and scope of what is understood and applied by career centre differs greatly from country to country. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, for example, the career centre model rather narrowly applies only to vocational schools and students (and although gymnasia students are often located in the same building, they are not included yet). A much wider, open-access approach is applied in Montenegro, where it clearly goes beyond sub-sectors to serve and target groups in employment and education and even all citizens. In such cases, a certain compensatory function is evident in terms of catering for needs and groups in other sectors who cannot deliver on career guidance. A wider rationale for fishing in the waters of others is the declared preventive approach towards unemployment (for example by the Centre for Information and Professional Counselling and the public employment services in Montenegro), which assumes unemployment to result largely from deficits in the education system. The aim is, therefore, to reach out as much and as early as possible to students in schools, before wrong and irreversible decisions are taken.

From the perspective of the professionalisation of delivery agents,

another model appears to be widespread in EU neighbouring countries: a semi-professional model. It relies on different semi-specialists (from a class or subject teacher to an employment counsellor) offering career guidance services, even though these people may not necessarily have a specialisation in career guidance or are not necessarily highly interested in this part of their job. If spread over a variety of institutions (possibly with different functions), this model bears a high risk of either fragmentation or overlap of career guidance services.

Box 7 provides an overview of different career guidance delivery models, as identified for this study of EU neighbouring countries; also included are other interventions that could be applied but which remain untapped to date.

The career centre model has some potential to bridge the gap of institutional disconnection that often exists between different ministries and providers. It also has the capacity to cluster different competences within one institutional setting and to achieve greater focus. It might be expensive, but less so if it can build on already existing structures in an organic way (for example, infrastructure and staff from employment services or other opportunity providers). Costs might also be saved due to better effectiveness and less overlap with other services – as in the fragmented semi-specialist model.

A virtual career guidance model using, for example, web-based interactive solutions or online counselling, has not been identified in any of the countries reviewed.

The reasons why one model prevails in a country compared to another are certainly manifold and can be historical, political or even cultural; this is an aspect that will need to be further explored. Some indications of the reasons may become clearer when analysing career guidance policies.

Box 7: Taxonomy and matrix overview of current and potential career guidance interventions in EU neighbouring countries (2007/08)

MODALITY	Career information	Career management	Work experience	Testing	Individual guidance	Group guidance	Counselling
CURRICULUM MODEL							
Compulsory subject career education or similar							
Compulsory part of (an)other subject(s)							
Compulsory curriculum principle (all or several subjects)							
Elective subject career education or similar							
Part of (an)other elective subject(s)							
Part of curricular activities	✓						
Part of extra-curricular activities							
CENTRE MODEL							
Centre inside school or university	✓		✓				
Centre outside school or university, specifically for education							
Centre for the unemployed within the PES	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Centre for all citizens, in or outside educational or labour market settings							
SPECIALIST MODEL							
School guidance counsellor (full-time or part-time)							
School psychologist				✓			
School pedagogue, sociologist, social worker				✓			
Guidance specialist in PES	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
SEMI-SPECIALIST MODEL							
Class teacher	✓						
Subject teacher	✓						
(Deputy) director in schools							
Employment counsellor in PES	✓				✓	✓	
VIRTUAL MODEL							
Website							
Web-based interactive							

PES: public employment services

4. POLICY AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

4

Preventive and reactive/remedial policy models

Fretwell and Plant (2001) distinguish between preventive and reactive/remedial policy models in career development in developed countries (such as Canada, the UK and the Netherlands), but also including a few transition economies (Hungary). Preventive policies that, for example, set benchmarks for the provision of services are most prevalent in education and youth career development settings, where there are deliberate attempts to develop skills for lifelong career planning and decision making. Reactive policies predominate in labour institutions dealing with the unemployed in many countries.

Applying this distinction to EU neighbouring countries, the picture seems not to be as clear-cut. Most EU neighbouring countries tend to adhere rather to the reactive/remedial policy model, both in education (for example, in Ukraine to tackle the pressing problem of the deficient labour supply of skilled and manual workers in

almost all occupations) and employment (for example, guidance policies and services by public employment services in Egypt and most other countries).

Additionally, for some countries a new dimension covering absent policies needs to be added. Career guidance has not been on the policy agenda at all until very recently in Georgia and Albania. In some other countries another absence can be observed, since career guidance has often been a forgotten element in the overall education and labour market policy development and reform process (Zelloth et al., 2003). This is true also for donor-funded projects in VET, employment and social inclusion (for example in the Western Balkans in the 1990s) and in the former EU candidate countries.

If articulated policies are in place, they may vary considerably between the education and employment sectors, and there appears to be some disconnection between stated policies and actual practice.

Low-, medium- and high-profile policy countries

In an attempt to classifying career guidance policies in EU neighbouring countries in a way that reflects their current levels of priorities and actual practices in applying these policies, three categories of countries appear to exist.

1. Low-policy-profile countries, in which career guidance features rather low on the policy agenda in education and employment, or where it has been on the theoretical agenda and in policy documents for some time, but where the disconnection between stated policies and actual practice is evident and overall dynamics and progress is low. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania and perhaps also Russia would fall into this category.
2. Medium-policy-profile countries, in which career guidance features quite high on the policy agenda or has recently moved up significantly, and where stated policies are followed by some concrete initiatives or even especially successful actions. Countries such as Georgia and Egypt could be classified as such.
3. High-policy-profile countries, in which career guidance features quite high or even prominently on the policy agenda, and where implementation follows coherently either with large-scale projects or innovative approaches. Policymakers are quite aware of the need and benefits of guidance. These features can be observed in Montenegro, Turkey, Ukraine and perhaps also Jordan.

The determination of the policy profile level in a given country seems to be less a matter of belonging to a certain geographical region as of being influenced by other factors. An example is the difference between Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, two countries from the same family of the former Yugoslavia. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, although an EU candidate country, is moving forward at a slow pace and with less dynamism in career guidance (also in other areas)

compared to Montenegro, which is characterised by a more reform-conducive environment and a new motivation and determined spirit in society to move the country ahead. Apart from the role that certain push and pull factors for demand in career guidance might play (as outlined in Section 2.3) – such as an expanding economic environment, labour market mismatches, structural unemployment, increasing diversity and flexibility of learning opportunities, push factors from the supply side, etc. – other factors that are more specific to the policy-shaping process also appear to be determining the policy profile level.

One approach to determining these factors would be to link career guidance to wider developmental concepts as applied by EU neighbouring countries. The dichotomy between home-grown versus donor-driven developments can capture some features and reveal a certain correlation between policy profiles and the type of development model. Low-policy-profile countries are likely to adhere to the donor-driven model (particularly the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania). On the other hand, high-policy-profile countries tend to be more connected to the home-grown development model (Ukraine and Montenegro), while, at the same time, retaining the capacity to attract substantial and large-scale donor support because of their higher stage of policy development (Turkey and Jordan).

Donor-driven versus home-grown career guidance development

Apparently, some countries seem to follow a rather donor-driven developmental approach and other countries follow more a home-grown pattern of career guidance development. The first approach assumes that without any donor initiative or donor support the country possibly has not (substantially) embarked on career guidance (or perhaps is leaving it to a later stage). It is evident that this is to some extent true also for areas other than career guidance subject to donor support.

Countries that would comply with this definition are the former Yugoslav Republic

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of Macedonia (Boxes 3 and 8), Albania, Jordan and, to a certain extent, Turkey. In Albania, for example, there is evidence even in other areas that reform and innovations do not progress much until some external incentives or carrots are proffered, such as donor funding (the latter sometimes paradoxically contributing to innovations that, in the end, are not sustainable). Turkey, despite a promising National Protocol on Guidance for Social Partners and Ministries, signed on the eve of the launch of a World Bank supported project in 2004, has remained without major progress in career guidance in recent years. It seems to follow the approach of waiting for a donor, since all national key actors have been waiting for the donor project, which has been delayed for nearly four years (until 2008).

The donor-driven model bears several risks and disadvantages, such as policy borrowing or even policy copying from donor countries, both often lacking contextual embedding and adaptation to the local context; there is also the high risk of missing out on ownership by stakeholders in the countries. For example, when donors depart or donor-funded policy and practice development projects finish, a lack of sustainability can often be observed. This risk is aggravated if framework conditions for sustainable implementation are missing or not included in the project design from the beginning, if the level of communication with key stakeholders or their level of understanding of the topic is not high or deep enough, if the wrong stakeholders are targeted, if governments or agencies are not sufficiently committed, and even if government change is involved.

An example of innovation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia career guidance system (see Box 8) was a promising initiative that was destined to fail since the framework conditions for sustainability were not sufficiently built up during implementation and because political commitment was overestimated.

As opposed to donor-driven or donor-waiting approaches, countries such as Montenegro, Ukraine, Georgia and, to a

certain extent, Egypt, seem to have followed a different path, launching home-grown policy and practice developments in career guidance at their own initiative and interest over time. In 2006, Georgia made a home-grown start from scratch in a unique partnership between NGOs and the education administration; however, it will need external support soon to further progress in career guidance development. Ukraine too has followed its own development path in career guidance, following independence from the Soviet Union, and has not received any donor support in the last decade. Similarly, Montenegro has realised the demand for career guidance on its own and started to build a system of centres for information and professional counselling without any donor support.

Home-grown development may in some instances be complemented by donor funding (as is planned in Montenegro with funding from the EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance in 2009); however, it is not solely dependent on it nor does it drive the agenda. That both approaches can be combined in a mixed model is demonstrated by Jordan, where a project supported by the Canadian International Development Agency initiated career guidance development which is now continuing autonomously; donor support in this case successfully built upon a strategic lever (the National Centre for Human Resources Development), which in turn became a national driver behind career guidance development.

Although it can be assumed that the level of ownership is higher in the home-grown model, at the same time, the sustainability of policy and practice is not necessarily guaranteed. In Ukraine, for example, career guidance policy has proved to be quite volatile from the 1990s until now, first promoting and implementing a career centre model, then abolishing it and now possibly introducing it again. Whereas home-grown development might face a certain risk of underutilised exploration and learning from other examples and options that are available, it may be failing less to adapt to local cultural and socio-economic specificities. Arulmani and Abdulla (2007)

Box 8: Model for professional counselling and mediation for employment in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

In the framework of an EU-funded CARDS VET II project component, a working group of representatives from both the education and employment sectors developed a draft model for professional counselling and mediation for employment. This model outlined the principles, goals and functions of career guidance and pointed to some questions and dilemmas, such as who should be responsible for career counselling or who would lead the process. The field visit, however, revealed that this document is not known either by both new policymakers or practitioners and that the related tool developed (an instrument for monitoring student counselling in secondary vocational schools) has never been implemented, apart from a few active pilot schools that continued the project on their own initiative.

Key people interviewed did not know why this model had never been followed up or implemented. However, it seems that some reasons could be linked to the assumptions that the results produced by an expert group and some officials were not sufficiently communicated at the policy-making level, that leadership was lacking and that the commitment of all the actors concerned was too low.

Centres for career guidance and counselling in vocational schools

Within a component of the EU-funded Phare VET I programme, a project on career guidance and counselling for students was implemented in 2000, establishing centres for career guidance and counselling in 16 pilot vocational schools. The pilot school coordinators were freed up from teaching and could dedicate 50% of their time to counselling and project activities, including a small portion to guidance. In each of the 16 vocational schools, psychologists and school pedagogues were trained in career guidance activities, and 10 further vocational schools were included in 2001. In the same period, in 52 primary schools, a professional adviser (a pedagogue or psychologist) was trained in career guidance as well. Through a kind of portfolio, the achievements of the students were followed and students were trained in how to prepare a CV. However, when the project finished in 2002, coinciding with a change in government, it failed to be sustainable and these guidance activities did not continue, partly because teachers had to return to teaching and the framework conditions for sustainability were lacking.

note that reviews of the impact of career services have consistently indicated that counselling and guidance remain notional until a connection is made with local realities. Recent research findings from India and the Maldives show that the combination of a social marketing initiative (what is known as the Yes Campaign) and a career guidance intervention employed in tandem had the strongest impact on the behaviours and attitudes of young people.

Policy capacities

Capacities for policy shaping and making in career guidance – in terms of appropriate

organisational structures, number of staff and understanding modern career guidance concepts – are very limited in most EU neighbouring countries, in particular, in education administration. The only two exceptions where separate guidance units with a critical mass of staff are in place are Russia and Turkey. Turkey in particular has a well developed counselling and guidance section in the Ministry of Education as well as provincial directorates for special education and guidance services. In a country as small as Montenegro, with only one full-time advisor each for primary and secondary education, the Ministry of Education cannot be

expected to host also a career guidance function. However, both the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro have established national VET agencies, also mandated with a support function for career guidance, although, to date, this has materialised neither in activities nor in the organisational chart of these agencies. Even in larger countries like Egypt and Ukraine, the education administration does not provide for special units or functions dealing with career guidance policy.

This policy vacuum and shortage of policy-making capacities in certain countries creates a disconnection between policy and practice and, furthermore, weakens potential career guidance development. Pushed by demand, practice either has the option to move forward on its own home-grown and sometimes even bottom-up initiatives or to be supported by external donor-driven projects, both options resulting in a landscape where fragmented and different career guidance flowers blossom.

Whereas appropriate structures for policy making in career guidance are mostly lacking in the education sector, the situation is different in labour administrations, where special units responsible for career guidance are frequently present, either within the ministries concerned (in Egypt within the Ministry of Manpower and Migration) or within the public employment services (in Montenegro within the National Employment Agency). These central units often also have a certain development function regarding training and methodological support to practitioners.

Leadership patterns

As a result of the segmented approach to policy-making in career guidance, all the countries reviewed have developed separate structures in the education and employment sectors with policies and operations that are not much coordinated and so, perhaps, less effective. That this feature is not unique to EU neighbouring countries seems to be supported by Fretwell and Plant (2001), who revealed, in

their comparison between a number of developed countries, a fault line that divides the career development field like a tectonic plate between two sectors that seldom meet in mutual cooperation yet constantly influence each other and interact.

An example of the huge need for such cross-sector coordination is provided again by Turkey, where the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security agreed on a Protocol for Cooperation in Career Information, Guidance and Counselling Services as far back as 1992. This protocol was revived and considerably broadened in 2004, to include the Under-Secretariat of the State Planning Agency, the State Statistics Institute Presidency, the Higher Education Board Presidency, the Directorate General of the Turkish Employment Agency, the Presidency of the Agency for Development and Support of Small and Medium Scale Industry, the National Productivity Centre, the Turkish Union of Chambers and Stock Exchanges, the Confederation of Turkish Employer Unions, the Turkish Confederation of Tradespersons and Artisans and the Confederation of Turkish Worker Unions.

More recently, the deputy prime minister of Ukraine issued a special edict on guidance, calling for improved cooperation and coordination between the ministries concerned, other key stakeholders and providers in career guidance.

Leadership for career guidance in a country may change over time, but it directly affects policy content, application and outcomes. In most EU neighbouring countries the initial leadership for career guidance policy tends to come from the employment sector, which can be partly explained through the more developed policy-making capacities outlined above. The most pronounced examples of clear leadership by the employment sector are Ukraine (both the Ministry of Labour and public employment services) and Montenegro (National Employment Agency). In Montenegro, this leadership is accepted by the education sector and other actors, whereas the leadership picture in

the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is more blurred. In other countries, where no clear leadership can be attributed, a ping-pong risk has been observed, with one actor expecting another to do something and to move first, and nobody moving as a result. This can be true even within a sector, as in the case of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: the Ministry of Education may expect something from the Education Agency, which in turn expects policy delivery from the VET Agency, which is

waiting for the Ministry of Education to take a lead, and so on.

Leadership is often coupled with institutional interest and/or a compensatory function. For example, the more pronounced the lack of services provided by the education sector, the more likely the employment sector will reach out to schools and students (Montenegro and Ukraine) or vice versa (Georgia) in order to fill this gap, even if at the expense of their own targeted core groups.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND POINTERS ON GUIDANCE

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The report has identified a number of push and pull factors shaping the demand for career guidance but has also revealed several features that act as barriers for career guidance development in EU neighbouring countries. The pro-demand factors appear to prevail and in nearly all countries, there are policy beliefs in place that career guidance can be useful and effective in contributing to wider educational and labour market goals.

The levels of policy profile (policy interest and the priority of guidance) differ between countries but are not determined or correlated with the three geographical regions (Eastern Europe, Western Balkans and the Mediterranean). Apart from demand issues, important factors appear to be the wider developmental philosophy applied by countries (home-grown versus donor-driven), leadership structures and available policy capacities in a cross-sectoral context.

Critical features linked to the contextual specificities of transition economies and

low- and middle-income countries that influence the nature and shape of career guidance – such as the role of the informal sector and informal guidance and its interrelation with formal guidance delivery – remain still unclear and unresearched, and so further light needs to be shed on these grey zones. This is particularly important since responding to the demand for career guidance would need to take into account both dimensions – the pro-demand and barrier factors.

The current predominant models of career guidance delivery (that is, the psychological and semi-professional models), the limited and fragmented provision and the existing patterns in leadership and policy making in EU neighbouring countries do not seem to constitute an efficient and effective system capable of responding to the challenges that most countries are already facing in the areas of education and labour market reforms as a result of wider economic developments.

Multiple challenges

Despite the different stages of development of the EU neighbouring countries, they all face a number of common challenges in career guidance policy and practice, among them the following:

- to consider both informal labour market and informal guidance provision when shaping new career guidance services, due to the high share of the informal economy and to the influence of specific allocation mechanisms in the education system and the labour market. In formal-informal economies, in particular, young people need support to navigate through such mixed systems in order to make better decisions that are not regretted afterwards;
- to foster demand-driven rather than supply-driven career guidance provision and a home-grown rather than a donor-driven development model, through more systematic analysis of the real demand for services and by aiming at a service provision which fits the size and socio-economic circumstances of the country;
- to adopt a cost-efficient approach in career guidance by putting the emphasis on career information, career education, self-help and web-based approaches, developing networking and synergies between different providers and initiatives and using untapped potential, all of which can be done by shifting from a psychological approach to pedagogical or hybrid approaches;
- to transform policy into practice and to ensure sustainability of career guidance development by overcoming barriers to implementing policies (limited capacities and a lack of specialists and resources) and by developing mechanisms for sustainability to be built into projects (ownership and leadership, effective resource planning and capacity building of the career guidance profession), so as to maintain and sustain innovations in the career guidance arena after external funding has finished;
- to gradually move towards the lifelong guidance paradigm, on which very few EU neighbouring countries to date have

embarked (for example, Turkey, Ukraine and Montenegro).

Conclusions for EU neighbouring countries

The demand for career guidance seems huge and is on the rise in most EU neighbouring countries, but this demand needs to be better articulated. One way to address this issue could be through building up an evidence base and fostering research on career guidance. Such analysis is necessary in the entire arena of demand and supply and process and impact issues, and should include preferably a longitudinal dimension. It might cover analysis of supply effectiveness and efficiency and an evaluation of the work done by school psychologists and other delivery agents with regard to their career guidance function, and also of career guidance delivery by public employment services staff for the unemployed and students in educational settings. Other options, such as more demand-side research, could focus on the needs of certain target groups and on factors influencing educational and occupational choices (career decision making). Long-term peer group analyses of students for behavioural and career outcomes could potentially provide evidence for impact of career guidance services. Feasibility studies on different models and options for career guidance services would support policy development and policy-making processes.

Even if some countries are more advanced than others and more attracted by the concept of lifelong guidance, all the EU neighbouring countries reviewed are quite a distance from the new EU and OECD paradigm and lifelong guidance services, in terms of both policy development and the provision of services. Many countries (Egypt and Georgia, for example) still have to answer some basic questions and struggle with some basic decisions, such as when to start with career guidance/education and where to seed plants or concentrate resources, who should be the most appropriate key delivery agents and how to close the most pressing gaps in provision, given that

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critical population groups (like those in transition from school to work or young unemployed people) receive hardly any or insufficient services to help them make more informed decisions on education and occupation trajectories.

All countries seem to face the dual challenge of providing wider access to guidance services (instead of limiting counselling to a few) and changing the mode of delivery. In some countries, the challenge is not only to create services, but also to refocus existing services so that they are provided more effectively. For example, more resource-efficient approaches, such as career education, tiered systems of assistance, career information and self-help, technology- and telephone-based solutions (if culturally appropriate and accepted), could be viable options for expanding access to career guidance services in the context of limited resources often experienced by EU neighbouring countries. In parallel, in some countries there is a need to create a critical mass of guidance practitioners, to broaden the skills of career guidance practitioners and introduce new types of basic qualifications to prepare the next generation of professionals for new ways of providing services.

As part of a more resource-efficient delivery, a move from the psychological to the pedagogical or hybrid model is critical and highly recommended, but even within the psychological model there is scope for potential efficiency gains. A shift from costly and non-effective psychological testing to work experience through exploration of occupations – although perhaps a long way in the future – would be key to getting closer to labour market realities and individual expectations, and a way of improving the image of career guidance in these countries.

Another key for future development that would fit to contextual specificities would be to introduce a career management skills approach in education and training, empowering individuals to plan and manage their own careers. This could be implemented jointly with ongoing curricular reforms and, in particular, could be

combined with entrepreneurship learning and other key competences. Although in all countries there is large scope for career education programmes (or elements of programmes, either curricular or extracurricular) to supplement other instruments, little willingness or high barriers (rigid curricula, particular interest groups involved in curriculum reform, etc.) appear to exist at present.

Given the increasing recognition of the importance of career information in the career guidance process in general and the shortage of career information, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, in most EU neighbouring countries, there is an urgent need to build up comprehensive career information. Apart from classical information about economic sectors, occupational trends and databases for formal and non-formal learning opportunities, information is needed on accessing both the formal and informal labour markets. In addition, information about entrepreneurship, self-employment opportunities and migration seems to be particularly relevant for EU neighbouring countries.

Given the relatively high importance of informal guidance in EU neighbouring countries, formal provision needs to take into account, to build upon and to collaborate further with parents, peers and other influential groups in the individual's environment.

Learning from policy and practice examples implemented in other EU neighbouring countries is still deficient and mutual learning for similar and comparable EU neighbouring countries should be encouraged and maximised. A number of innovative policy and practice examples that are worth exploring already exist and have been identified in this report.

The enormous deficits in strategic leadership and policy capacities in career guidance need to be tackled in order to overcome policy vacuums and ping-pong risks and to be able to build on reliable and sustainable structures. One viable approach to tackling these kinds of shortcomings would be by increasing

synergies through enhanced networking and coordination. Experience shows that in many EU neighbouring countries existing guidance services and initiatives are not well linked and even communication is often lacking. Some kind of national forum – like those currently being developed and applied in different forms by many EU Member States – could provide a viable platform for improving cooperation and networking, at the national level, through regular dialogue and exchange of information and cooperation on aspects such as materials, service delivery, etc. Such a forum could comprise representatives from key ministries or agencies concerned with guidance, from all providers of career guidance (including donors), practitioners and other stakeholders like parent and student associations and NGOs. If well resourced, a forum could in addition fulfil an advisory role for policymakers.

Conclusions for the European Commission

The large stock and critical mass of knowledge and expertise, tools and instruments, networks and policy documents developed in the area of career guidance by the EU in recent years – intended as a huge resource for EU Member States – could in principle also be used by EU neighbouring countries. The European Commission could involve candidate and potential candidate countries by associating them with the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network of Member States and providing the ETF with a mandate to link other EU neighbouring countries to this process.

These career guidance resources could serve EU neighbouring countries for reflection on their own career guidance

structures and policies, but could also be useful for inspiration and for experimenting with and testing new policies and methods, with a view to further developing a career guidance provision that is ready to face the challenges of the future.

In the programming and design of future EU programmes and projects for EU neighbouring countries, the European Commission could introduce thematic cross-checks, for example, for transversal and cross-cutting issues such as whether career guidance should be considered as an integrated part of the overall intervention; this would make education and labour market reform projects more efficient and effective. Experience shows that components which could have had a gluing function in a programme or project were not present or had been overlooked in the reforms. The ETF, as the EU's centre of expertise in human capital development, could be systematically involved in supporting this process and in undertaking possible transversal content checks.

This becomes particularly relevant in the case of sector-wide approaches, which are increasingly attractive for EU neighbouring countries. A sector-wide approach by definition increases the probability of including transversal and transferable issues (such as career guidance) as the isolation or compartmentalisation of sub-sectors is less likely to happen.

Enhanced networking between the EU and other donors in EU neighbouring countries would be an appropriate approach in order to avoid a potential proliferation of fragmented funding initiatives and to assess possible joint approaches for funding projects for career guidance services in the future, based on a home-grown development philosophy.

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EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION

IN DEMAND: CAREER GUIDANCE IN EU NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the
European Communities

2009 – 64 pp. – 21.0 x 29.7 cm

ISBN: 978-92-9157-567-1

DOI: 10.2816/78201

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