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Career guidance in the European Context - new knowledge, skills and competencies for career counsellors

Ivan Prelovský, MSc.

Dr. Laura Gressnerová, M.A

Institute of Engineering Studies, Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava

ivan.prelovsky@stuba.sk

laura.gressnerova@stuba.sk

Abstract:

High quality guidance and counselling services play a key role in supporting lifelong learning, career management and achievement of personal goals. The shift to lifelong guidance can best be supported through European cooperation and partnerships with higher educational institutions.

In the context of lifelong education the career counselling represents a set of activities that allow to citizens of every age and in every stage of life to identify their possibilities, competencies and interests, to be able to decide about their education, vocational training and employment, and to master his personal career in education, work and other areas in which they adopt and/or use these capabilities.

In the frame of the Project ERASMUS, Multilateral projects "Development and Implementation of Common Bachelor's Programme in the European Context", eight universities from EU (SK, CY, EE, ES, GE, HR, PL, UK) are developing common study programme with joint diploma/Diploma Supplement for career counsellors.

MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT:

- Harmonization of higher education and postgraduate education for career guidance in partner countries, by accepting comparable academic degrees, joint diploma / Diploma Supplement.
- Securing the transparency of existing national systems of career counsellors' (CC) education, to improvement of recognitions of their qualifications, support of international mobility of students and graduates.
- Improvement of quality in provided higher education, its further internationalisation as well as employment of higher education graduates at domestic and international labour markets.

1. Heading



Career guidance in the European Context - new knowledge, skills and competencies for career counsellors

(The project Development and Implementation of Common Bachelor's Degree Programme in the European Context)

The high quality career guidance and counselling services play a key role in supporting lifelong learning, career management and management of human resources.

The definition of career guidance by OECD, the European Commission and the World Bank: *“Career guidance refers to services and activities intended to assist individuals, of any age and at any point throughout their life, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their career. Such services may 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 tools, counselling interviews, career education programmes (to help individuals develop their self-awareness, opportunity awareness and career management skills), taster programmes (to sample option before choosing them), work search programmes, and transition services.”*

In the context of lifelong education the career counselling represents a set of activities that allow to citizens of every age and in every stage of life to identify his/her possibilities, competencies and interests, to be able to decide about their education, vocational training and employment, and to master his personal career in education, work and other areas in which they adopt and/or use these capabilities. The training of counsellors for new particular challenges must take into account, on top of the inalienable methodological and ethical standards of individual counselling, market policy and political aspects. Hence there exists a great need for future development of competences in international guidance.

Effective lifelong guidance in the frame of European Union can be supported through European cooperation and partnerships between providers of guidance services, social partners, guidance practitioners in education and employment, and young, adult and senior citizens as service users and institutions providing education for career counsellors. Career guidance and counselling is changing gradually, resulting from the complex demands placed by the society on career guidance practitioners, because their working environments, and client groups are becoming more diverse.

The provision of career counselling in the system of education and vocational training play a principal role in securing a solid basis for making decisions of individuals about their education and career, and helping them to develop effective management of their own education and career. It is a decisive tool for institutions of education and Professional training, providing for improvement of education. Lifelong career counselling contributes to attaining the EU objectives concerning economic development, labour market and work and geographical mobility, namely, by improvement of efficiency of investments in education and vocational training, lifelong education, development of human resources and workforce.

The efficient provision of career counselling has a key significance in providing social inclusions, social and racial equality and active citizenship, by promoting participation of individuals in education and vocational training and at the choice of realistic and meaningful career. In the present period of economic crisis the vocational training of employees providing CC services is vital.

The content, form and length of higher education and vocational education and training of career counsellors in individual countries differ and many a time do not answer to future demands of the labour market. The aim is to support in agreement with Bologna process and recommendations of Berlin Declaration and other EC documents the approximation of European higher education area and to provide for greater compatibility of higher education and to widen the possibilities of postgraduate education for career guidance.

The project “DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRAMME IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT – DICBDPEC” No: is carried out with the support of the European Community as part of the Lifelong Learning Programme, Sub-programme ERASMUS, Multilateral projects. The project started in October 2010 and ends in September 2013. Project has been centrally approved by Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency for Slovak Republic as the only one project in the frame ERASMUS Multilateral project in 2010 (within this call has been approved only 22 projects form EU).

Taking part in project are universities from the EU member countries – Slovakia, Cyprus, Germany, Estonia, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom and from pre-accession countries, Croatia.

Project contractor and coordinator:

Institute of Engineering Studies of Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava, Slovakia

Partners of project:

University of Nicosia, Cyprus

Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia

University of Applied Labour Studies, Mannheim, Germany

Jan Dlugosz University in Czestochowa, Poland

University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain

University of Derby, United Kingdom

University of Split, Croatia

The project DICBDPEC is based on European Union documents, especially:

- European Social Charter, Article No. 9 – “The right to receive counselling when choosing an occupation“ (1961)
- Conclusions of the European Council from Lisbon, as stated in the “Lifelong Learning Memorandum” which defines a new approach to professional counselling and guidance as one of the “key messages”. (2000)
- Bologna Declaration, which aims to create a European Higher Education Area.
- Professionalising career guidance – Practitioner competences and Qualification routes in Europe. (CEDEFOP 2009)

European added value primarily consists remarkable modernization of education for career counselling according to the needs of the present labour market and in view of its expected development.

Project will supplement all the activities aimed education of career counsellors as it will give a European focus to internal/national review. The project is innovative in that lead European-wide study of career counselling. The resultant product of the project, the integrated study programme, innovative educational programme for postgraduate education and specialized terminological dictionary will be issued in languages of all partners countries. Identification of national and European programmes of economic and social development is very important. Harmonization of European higher education, modernization and widening of opportunities of postgraduate study using ICT, has a great significance particularly today, in the period of the economic crisis. It is vital to react to new, topical challenges at labour market considering unemployment of university-educated young people, who do not find employments matching their qualification at national and, many a time, European labour market (Brain Drain – Brain Gain – Brain Waste). Considering the facts the project is especially topical not only within the framework of national, but also European space. Innovation of higher education and vocational education of career counsellors will contribute to improvement of competencies of young people in the process of integration in the labour market as well as to intensification of the influence of career counselling services in this area. The product of project will be of European-wide value as the partners from EU member states and pre-accession countries will share know-how and responsibilities for project outcomes.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

- Harmonization of higher education and postgraduate education for career guidance in partner countries, by accepting comparable academic degrees, joint diploma / Diploma Supplement.

- Securing the transparency of existing national systems of career counsellors' (CC) education, to improve the recognition of their qualifications, support of international mobility of students and graduates.
- Improvement of quality in higher education, its further internationalisation as well as the employment of higher education graduates in domestic and international labour markets.

The acceptance of common credits in the study programme of Bachelor study and in modular education programme for postgraduate study will enable better employment at national and European labour market as well as to equal rights at job searching. It is aimed at improvement of quality of higher education and vocational training, acquisition of new skills and competencies of target groups, experts specialising in career guidance. It supports European dimension, adaptability and extension of mobility of persons entering labour market;

RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

- Integrated study programme covering the cycle of study (Bachelor) with using the credits (ECTS), enabling learners to obtain the recognised joint diploma/Diploma Supplement.
- Innovated modular educational programme for postgraduate study for CC using ICT.
- Professional terminology dictionary developed in languages of all partner countries (DE, EL, EN, ES, ET, HR, PL, SK) along with unified professional terminology in the field of career guidance in EU context.
- Criteria of quality evaluation of education for career guidance (with utilization of the ECTS and Diploma Supplement) and proposal of the criteria of quality (in agreement with EU standards quality ESG) for study programme of higher and postgraduate education of CC.
- Accreditation of educational programmes.

IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

- Enlargement of European area of higher education in the field of career guidance.
- Improvement of quality of collaboration between institutions of higher education in the EU framework.
- Increasing the degree of transparency and correspondence between qualifications obtained within the framework of higher education for CC in the EU.
- Support of the development and transfer of innovation procedures with the support of ICT in higher education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the field of career guidance among partner countries.
- Introducing integrated higher education of the CC within the EU context.
- Increasing the quality and access to higher education and VET for experts specialized in career guidance with regard to EU dimension.

For achievement of the above aims all project partners prepared on first workshop:

- National Survey and Analysis: Survey of needs and career guidance, requirements and demands for CC profession and performance of career counselling in partner countries. Survey of higher education and VET of CC. Survey on forms, content, level and length of higher education and VET in the field of CC in partner countries.
- Analysis of higher education of CC. Analysis of differences in content, forms and length and demands for qualification and competencies required for career counselling. Analysing the state, requirements and demand of occupation of CC and pursuit of career counselling in different sectors.
- Based on these national surveys and analysis was made international comparison of higher education for career counsellors.
- Information on national strategies and trends of economic and social development in partner countries.

On workshop was presented Strategies and trends of economic and social development in the framework of EU, demands of future qualifications and perspectives of employment at international labour market by EU Members (Dr. Edit Bauer and prof. Dr. Alojz Mészáros).

At the current phase of the project, based on the results of comparison and international projects in the field of career guidance (Leonardo da Vinci, Modular distance Learning for European Mobility Career Counsellors, Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation "Brain Drain - Brain - Gain " - Qualification modules for Counsellors ; ERASMUS Networks, University Network for Innovation in guidance) and recent documents relating to the professionalising of career guidance (practitioner competences and qualification routes in EU) partners jointly prepared the draft of common bachelor's study programme.

More information about project you can find on website: www.ies.stuba.sk/erasmus

Authors:

Dr. Laura Gressnerova, M.A.

Ivan Prelovsky, M.Sc.

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