

LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME
Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation

NETWORK SPECIFICATIONS GUIDE

Work Package 4 “Creating a network of certified career guidance counsellors in each participating country and pilot implementation of the prototype training programme”

Task 4.2 “Developing the specifications for the establishment and operation of the network in each country”

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1. Aim of the activity

The aim of this activity is to write a network specifications guide that together with activities 3.2 “Composition of a common European occupational profile for career guidance counsellors” and 3.3 “Design and adaptation of the training programme (training specifications and methods) and production of digital training material (e-training tools) for the career guidance training in each country”, will constitute the base for the establishment and operation of an e-network of career guidance counsellors common to partner countries and the pilot implementation of the prototype training programme in each partner country. In order to ensure the sustainability and the efficient management of the e-network, partners have jointly elaborated a written guide where the essential specifications have been determined. This guide deals with the core concepts and principles of the e-network as well as its main objectives, goals and activities.

2. Creating INNO-CAREER e-network

2.1 Leading principles and main objectives

The e-network lies on some leading principles:

- A. A common European occupational profile for career guidance counsellors who are professionals helping and supporting people to explore, pursue and attain their career goals. A career counsellor provides counselling in educational, career and personal domains. He assists individuals to achieve greater self-awareness, develop a life/work direction, increase understanding of learning and work opportunities and become self-directed in managing learning, work and relevant transitions¹. In this profile we acknowledge the different complexity of career guidance functions and the necessity of different levels of competence in practicing the professional roles of career guidance. This practically means that there are functions inside the profile that can be performed by all career guidance counsellors (basic level professionals) and others that can only be performed by people that are specialized in and can demonstrate substantial authority, although they are capable of performing all other

¹ ELGPN Glossary, June 2012

professional functions demanded by career guidance counsellors (expert level professionals) ²

- B. Mutual trust where members can share and exchange information, best practices concerning career guidance and guarantee that members fulfil network goals and entry requirements
- C. A quality approach for the whole implementation of the prototype training programme.

INNO-CAREER e-network will therefore provide a “safe” ground for the implementation of the prototype training programme addressed to career guidance counsellors and thus the enhancement of their skills in six different areas of career guidance in order to enable them to improve their working position.

The e-network will meet the following **main objectives**:

- facilitating the implementation of the prototype training programme
- attracting candidates to be involved in the pilot training
- enabling the recognition of the learning outcomes achieved by participants
- promoting - disseminating the training course and its results among career guidance stakeholders (ministries, social partners, public and private career guidance services, scientific unions and organizations etc) and career guidance counsellors so as to:
 - attract in the future new trainees wishing to upgrade their competences
 - improve the products of the project
- exchanging of good practices, share of knowledge and experiences with relevant projects in EU level and worldwide
- Defining and implementing common quality criteria.

2.2 Added value of the network

In order to achieve a better European added value, the e-network will be transnational and common with the possibility to create national sub-networks in each country.

The e-network will provide benefits to members and also to possible stakeholders operating in the field of career guidance to be involved in the future.

² European Summit on Developing the Career Workforce of the Future, Canterbury 3rd-4th September 2014, page27-28.

More specifically career guidance counsellors will have the opportunity to exchange information, opinions and experiences - good practices with peers, use new materials, acquire new competences and knowledge in order to access better working opportunities etc.

The future involvement of stakeholders in the e-network will enable to increase the attention on specific topics concerning career guidance, establishing new relationships and partnerships, earn influence and prominence, focus the attention on the sectoral needs, improve the products of the project (training course and materials) etc.

3. Network operational structure: Legal and institutional framework and governance structure

INNO-CAREER e-network won't be established as a legal entity. Indeed a legal status can make it rigid and reduce its capacity to adapt to changes. Moreover a legal status can entail costs and responsibilities which need specific management. In order to ensure the sustainability and impact it is necessary that members make an effort and work hard. This doesn't mean to bind members by a legal agreement. It is important to create a collaborative working environment involving all members in order to ensure the implementation of planned activities and make members responsible for issues which should be addressed in the context of the implementation of the training programme.

The governance structure is based on the principles of inclusiveness and efficiency but it has also to guarantee the peculiarities of national systems, the geographical diversity and the effective management of resources and inputs.

INNO-CAREER e-network will be based on a strategic alliance according to guidelines provided by the project Steering Committee that will supervise the implementation and management.

At the moment the e-network will be composed only of individuals that is (not organizations); professional career guidance counsellors working in different sectors. Members of the network will not be only the participants at the pilot training but also all career guidance counsellors interested in project topics. In the future national, European, international scientific organisations / networks / institutions operating in the career guidance sector may also be accepted in the network as a measure to promote the actions of the project to a broader public, share knowledge and experiences and exchange good practices that will improve the results of the project.

The e-network will be established before the start of the pilot training

- members have to register through online registration form, inside the e-network section of the project website, in order to get a username and password. The registration form will be in

- all partners' languages. There will be a technical administrator of the e-network (Euricon)
- the project Steering Committee will be responsible for providing the guidelines for the network implementation and management
 - it will be possible to have different discussion groups for each training module
 - members will be allowed to upload materials dealing with project topics

The e-network will have a Technical Administrator (Euricon) that will manage the technical details required for running the e-network and the forum. As such, the administrator will manage the rules, create sections and sub-sections, as well as perform any [database](#) operations ([database backup](#) etc.).

The e-network will operate on the INNO-CAREER project website as a specific section

4. Admission requirements

In order to join the e-network possible members have to online register completing a registration form available by clicking on the specific section of the INNO-CAREER website. Members will get a username and password. The registration form will be available in all partners' languages.

6. Quality assurance

The Project Steering Committee will apply a constant quality assurance procedure in order to maintain the quality of the e-network and ensure transparency and respect for the principles. The following indicators could be used:

- Membership indicators: The network is comprised of individuals that is professional career guidance counsellors working in different sectors
- Promotional indicators: Number of dissemination actions per year (articles, posts, presentations at meetings - seminars, newsletters etc.)
- Amount and quality of educational material, good practices - tools exchanged through the network members

7. Promotion and communication strategy

In order for the e-network to be successful it is important to design an appropriate promotion and

communication strategy that should be periodically reviewed. The strategy should establish the most appropriate communication channels in order to disseminate the information and the results achieved within the e-network as a community of practices. Collaboration and cooperation among members should be essential in ensuring the operational methodology of the network. The communication strategy will mainly lie on:

1. A sustainable and collaborative web forum (e-network) and discussion groups in order to foster the dialogue, spread the results achieved and promote the training programme to other career guidance counsellors and/or stakeholders. Therefore the efficient dissemination of the results of the various initiatives and other useful materials via the web forum will be important in maximising the engagement and involvement of key national and European stakeholders at every level..
2. Participating in scientific congresses, workshops or other national meetings in order to promote the e-network and the training course etc
3. Undertaking other dissemination actions per year (articles, posts, presentations at meetings - seminars, newsletters etc.)

The communication strategy will ensure that the added value of results becomes sustainable, and the impact in the sector of career guidance will be wider. The e-Network's web forum should become the key mean of communication in order to provide information and involve members, participants and relevant stakeholders. It should also be advisable to develop an RSS system to keep informed target groups. The RSS system should enable the network to quickly send information and updates to members and other key audiences/stakeholders, engaging them in the process. The RSS system should be the channel used to reach and communicate with members and other users -by automatic subscription (e.g. to the on-line Network). The Project Steering Committee should keep in touch in order to check if the communication flow is good or it needs to be improved.

8. Network future sustainability

It is important to consider the network sustainability also after project conclusion. Three different possibilities can be taken into consideration:

At the end of the INNO-CAREER project, the e-network will be maintained for the same period of the project website. Anyway project partners should continue the promotion of the training course using the following tools or occasions:

- Institutional websites.
- INNO-CAREER web forum

- National career guidance forums
- National, European or International meetings, seminars, congresses on career guidance, education and training

In particular the following activities can be pursued:

1. exchange of information, opinions and best practices among members and career guidance stakeholders and counsellors already involved
2. promotion of the training course to interested career guidance stakeholders and counsellors;
3. promotion of relevant projects and initiatives to career guidance stakeholders;
4. promotion of results achieved, training materials available and on-going progress of the project (e.g. improvement of products, results of network meetings etc) to the main stakeholders at international, European, national/regional and local level.

At the end of the grant period, project partners can also discuss about the possibility to find out other funds coming from national/regional programmes or to submit a new application under the Erasmus Plus Programme in order to guarantee the sustainability of the e-network.

At the end of the project, project partners could also think about the opportunity to involve potentially interested private sponsors or to introduce a registration fee for new members in order to guarantee the delivery of services on a permanent base.

Bibliography

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Creech, H.; Willard, T. 2001. Strategic Intentions. Managing Knowledge Networks for Sustainable Development. International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. www.iisd.org.

Visit the Cap-Net website www.cap-net.org for information on network principles, establishment, network examples and many others.

Council Resolution (19 December 2002, JO 2003/C 13/02) and Declaration (adopted in Copenhagen on 29 and 30 November 2002) of the European Ministers of Vocational Education and Training on the Promotion of Enhanced European Co-operation in VET

please see: <http://communities.trainingvillage.gr/quality>

Communiqué' on the Future Priorities of Enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training, (December 2004) following the Council Conclusions of 29 October 2004: it went on to detail how priorities at National and European levels, defined by the Education Council Conclusions should be put into practice

European Network on quality Assurance in VET Guiding principles and governance

EQAVET - Supporting the implementation of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training - WORK PROGRAMME TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A EUROPEAN QUALITY ASSURANCE REFERENCE FRAMEWORK FOR VET 2010-2012