

**LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME**  
**Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation**

# Textbook

## 06: Quality assurance issues in career guidance

Work package No: 3, activity 3.3.2

Responsible partner: EOPPEP

Date: 30/05/2015  
Version: Final

*“This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication - communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.”*

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## 1 About this module

This aim of this module is to introduce quality assurance issues in career guidance to trainees and to explain the role of career guidance counsellor in measuring quality levels at his service.

## 2 Learning outcomes

At the end of this module participants will have adequate knowledge on the following:

- The notion and necessity of quality assurance in career guidance
- European and international quality assurance frameworks and standards in career guidance
- The cycle of quality
- The components of a quality assurance system. Quality criteria, indicators and examples of possible data.
- Outcomes and impacts of career guidance
- A model quality assurance system

## 3 Study material content

### 3.1 The notion and necessity of quality assurance in career guidance

Short summary of the chapter.

This chapter deals with increased importance of quality assurance in career guidance at European policies, the notion of quality assurance and the aims of a quality assurance system

Lifelong Career Guidance<sup>1</sup> has been receiving increasing attention at both European and national levels. It is recognised as a cross-cutting theme of European policy design, touching upon general principles applicable to all policy fields, as well as being an important connecting element between policy fields such as schools, VET, higher education, adult

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<sup>1</sup> Lifelong Career Guidance refers to a range of activities that enable citizens of any age and at any point in their lives, to identify their capacities, competences and interests; to make meaningful educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are learned and/or used. Guidance is provided in a range of settings: education, training, employment, community and private. Career or vocational guidance is often just called guidance by practitioners. Guidance is in fact an umbrella that encompasses counselling as well as activities such as informing, coaching, teaching, assessment and advocacy. It is treated as a synonym of guidance and vocational guidance. Educational guidance, however, has been treated as a more specific term. (ELGPN Glossary)

learning, employment (including the reform of the Public Employment Services and EURES) and social inclusion, plus special horizontal policies (such as youth, active ageing, and citizens with special needs). It is also closely linked to the Europe 2020 Strategy which sets out strategic policy directions to re-invigorate economic growth that is smart, sustainable and inclusive. Of the five Europe 2020 headline indicators, three (Employment, Education and Poverty/Social Exclusion) are linked directly to the further development of European lifelong guidance systems and policies. Lifelong guidance should be recognised as an essential tool to achieve these targets. The work of the Expert Group on lifelong guidance<sup>2</sup> as well as other European studies<sup>3</sup> have paved the way for two Resolutions of the Education Council (in 2004<sup>4</sup> and 2008<sup>5</sup>) which have highlighted the need for strong guidance services throughout the lifespan to equip citizens with the skills to manage their learning and careers and the transitions between and within education/training and work. The Resolutions drew attention to four priority areas:

- 1. the development of career management skills;**
- 2. accessibility of services;**
- 3. quality assurance and evidence base for policy and systems development; and**
- 4. co-ordination of services.**

Member States were invited to take action to modernise and strengthen their guidance policies and systems based on these priorities.

**Quality assurance** refers to activities involving planning, implementation, evaluation, reporting, and quality improvement, implemented to ensure that guidance activities (content of programmes, design, assessment and validation of outcomes, etc.) meet the quality requirements expected by stakeholders.

Quality assurance for guidance typically involves ensuring that all staff understand what is required of them, that the necessary resources (including sufficiently trained staff) for effective delivery are available, and that performance is reviewed regularly and systematically to identify areas for improvement. A number of independently accredited quality standards (i.e. necessary training of staff) exist that have been developed to support

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<sup>2</sup> CEDEFOP (2005). *Improving lifelong guidance policies and systems. Using common European reference tools.*

<sup>3</sup> A survey of OECD in 14 countries focused on the contribution of career guidance in the fulfillment of Lifelong targets and made specific propositions regarding the improvement of resources, delivery and effectiveness of career guidance services e.g. improving the access to career guidance for all, making a shift from support upon immediate decisions to the development of career-management skills, providing evidence on impacts of career guidance, diverse delivery methods of guidance etc. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap.* Paris: OECD. See also OECD/EU (2004). *Career Guidance. A handbook for Policy Makers.*

<sup>4</sup> Council resolution on Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the field of Guidance throughout life in Europe (May 2004). <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%209286%202004%20INIT>

<sup>5</sup> Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies. (2905th Education, Youth and Culture Council meeting, Brussels, 21 November 2008)

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/educ/104236.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/educ/104236.pdf)

organisational quality assurance<sup>6</sup>.

The aims of a quality-assurance system and mechanisms are:

1. To improve efficiency of a career guidance service,
2. To justify expenditure or investment in career guidance by demonstrating clearly the added-value returns for individuals, communities and societies (to increase institutional financial accountability). As fiscal arrangements tighten, there will be ever greater pressure from governments for this.
3. To create transparency of career guidance services from the perspective of the citizen.

The development of quality assurance in career guidance services is not an isolated process: instead, it is an integral cross-cutting theme in a national lifelong guidance system and within institutional quality assurance systems that encompass education and training, employment and social inclusion<sup>7</sup>.

Question and tasks	Issues for reflection and review
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Why quality assurance in career guidance has become an overarching priority in European policies and strategies?</li> <li>2) What do we mean with the term “quality assurance in career guidance”?</li> </ol>

### 3.2 European and international quality assurance frameworks and standards in Career Guidance

Short summary of the chapter.

This chapter deals with sorts and kinds of quality assurance systems, differences between standards, guidelines and frameworks and most important quality assurance systems worldwide (Common European Reference Tools, Blueprint for Life/Work Designs, The British Matrix Standard, the ELGPN Quality Assurance and Evidence (QAE) Framework etc.)

Quality assurance frameworks are often distinguished between **standards** (which tend to be precise, directive, sometimes even rigid, with built-in checking procedures and/or sanctions, economically or otherwise) and **guidelines** which tend to be less directive, more general, and with no sanctions. Usually standards are technical specifications which are more measurable than guidelines. Depending on their scientific or target group background some guidelines or standards are aimed at the consumer, i.e. the general public; some are directed towards the guidance professionals, their competencies and the subsequent control procedures in terms

<sup>6</sup> Jackson, C. (Ed.) (2012). *ELGPN Glossary*. ELGPN, Jyväskylä, Finland.

<sup>7</sup> ELGPN. (2012). *Life guidance policy development: A European Resource kit*. University of Jyväskylä, Finland and Finnish Institute for Educational Research (FIER), Saarijärvi, Finland, page 49

of the actual performance of guidance practitioners; others deal with the quality of the information material, and some on delivery or learning outcomes. Distinctions can be drawn between<sup>8</sup>:

- standards relating to **inputs** (e.g. guidance professionals' standards, organisation/service-related standards), **processes** (e.g. the counselling process itself) and **output standards** (e.g. the quality of the learning outcomes of the guidance process). Most QA systems are either professionally (input) or output oriented, or both. Few focus on the guidance process itself.
- standards derived from the viewpoint of the **client/customer** versus standards derived from the need for **public accountability**
- standards that are **self-assessed** versus standards for **external accreditation**. (Most QA systems are based on self-evaluation of sectorally based guidance units. There are few examples (e.g. Matrix in the UK) of externally based QA systems.
- **general guidelines** or **codes of ethics** versus **specific measurable standards**.
- standards or guidelines issued by a **single professional guidance association** versus others that are produced by a **national council** as a process of a broader consultation process involving the social partners, governmental departments, users, etc.
- **"Top-down"** QA approaches versus **"bottom-up"** approaches. The first may be more manageable from a governmental point-of-view, but they often lack the sense of ownership that "bottom-up" approaches may offer, even though these in turn may be more patchy.

The issue of ownership is crucial: who defines, maintains, controls and owns such guidelines or standards? The need for common central/national quality guidelines or standards has grown (Fretwell & Plant, 2001). However career guidance quality standards seem more likely to be effective if they are developed in co-operation with key stakeholders (education and training providers; employers; trade unions; community agencies, students, parents, consumers, and career guidance practitioners)<sup>9</sup>. According to ELGPN, standards should have been drawn up by consensus and approved by an organisation with recognised and relevant expertise at regional, national or international levels.

Although there are many career guidance services which use quality standards that are general industrial standards such as ISO 9000 there exist quality standards, recommendations or frameworks specialized in career guidance. Below is a concise report on these.

- In 2005 Cedefop published the study *"Improving Life Long Guidance Policies and Systems"*<sup>10</sup>. It includes three common European reference tools for guidance:
  - **aims and principles of lifelong guidance provision**
  - **reference points for quality assurance systems for guidance provision in Europe**

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<sup>8</sup> Plant P. (2001). *Quality in Career Guidance*. OECD, page 6. See also ELGPN (2010) A report on the work of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network 2008-2010. University of Jyväskylä, Finland and Finnish Institute for Educational Research (FIER), Saarijärvi, Finland, page 52.

<sup>9</sup> OECD (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap*. Paris: OECD, page 13

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/4045\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/4045_en.pdf)

- **key features of lifelong guidance systems**

The tools were developed by the **Expert group on lifelong guidance** founded in 2002 by the European Commission to support the education and training 2010 work programme. They are intended as self-assessment tools to help Member States in particular persons with responsibility for guidance policies, systems and practices at national, regional and local levels as benchmarks in reviewing and developing existing provision.

- In 2005 Cedefop published the “*Study on Indicators and benchmarks for Life Long Guidance*”<sup>11</sup>. The study which intended to support the work of the European Commission’s Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance was commissioned by CEDEFOP and carried out by Stoas Research. The aims of the study were to provide an overview of key issues in lifelong guidance and to set out strategic recommendations for the Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance concerning the development of indicators and benchmarks for the short, the medium and the long term.
- The **Blueprint for Life/Work Designs** is a Canadian career guidance standard that is based on expected learning outcomes. The primary aim of the Blueprint is to enable practitioners (and funding sources for these practitioners) **1. to be clear about, and measure, the outcomes they are achieving by working with a national framework of competencies 2. to create comprehensive, effective and measurable life/work development programming and products so that Canadians become better able to manage their lives and work.** Typical organizations that can be benefited by the Blueprint are adult training programs/centres, career and one-stop centres, career development programs, elementary/early education schools, employability programs, human resource departments, middle years/junior high schools, post-secondary institutions, work experience programs etc. The core of the Blueprint is competencies and indicators organized around three major areas of competence:
  - A. Personal Management**
  - B. Learning and Work Exploration**
  - C. Life/Work Building**
- The British **Matrix Standard** for information, advice and guidance services is an external evaluation tool based on outcomes. Its purpose is to provide a benchmark for organisations to assess/measure their advice and support services which ultimately support individuals in their choice of career, learning, work and life goals. The standard can be applied to any organisation that manages, administers and delivers an information, advice, support and/or guidance service to support individuals in their choice of career, learning, work and life goals. It does not matter whether the service or services are delivered face-to-face, through training, learning, remotely, or through a website. Training Providers, Universities, Further/Higher

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<sup>11</sup> CEDEFOP (2005) *Study on Indicators and benchmarks for Life Long Guidance*

Education Colleges, Schools and Academies, Sole Traders, National Careers Service Providers, Voluntary and Community Organisations and Private Businesses are the most common organizations that have benefited from the standard. The matrix Standard is made up of four elements each one containing specific criteria that the organization has to meet:

1. **Leadership and Management** (This element is about the way in which the organisation is led and managed to develop an effective service)
  2. **Resources** (This element describes the assets invested and applied in providing an effective service)
  3. **Service Delivery** (This element describes the way in which the service is delivered effectively)
  4. **Continuous Quality Improvement** (This element describes the way in which the service provided is reviewed and improved on an ongoing basis)
- Beginning from its first work program (2009-2010) **ELGPN**<sup>12</sup> has devoted considerable efforts and time in the 4<sup>th</sup> priority of the 2008 resolution, in order to develop quality assurance and an evidence base for policy and systems development. A special Work Package (WP4) has been created which dealt with links between guidance policies, research and practice, in two respects:
- The role of and development of quality assurance (QA) approaches in guidance.
  - The evidence which could be produced to underpin, explain, improve and legitimise guidance activities.
- The members of WP4 gave particular emphasis in **reviewing policy initiatives and interesting practices in participating countries supplemented by examples from other parts of the world** regarding quality assurance in career guidance, as well as research undertaken to provide an evidence base for policy development. In particular they dealt with the following issues:
- European and international approaches in quality assurance of career guidance provisions
  - Quality criteria, indicators and benchmarks
  - Outcomes and impact of career guidance
  - Methods of measuring the impacts of career guidance
  - Methodological problems in evaluating the impact of career guidance
- In 2009-2010 the members of WP4 drew a framework that is based on the five common reference points for quality-assurance systems for guidance provision, developed by the EC Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance:

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<sup>12</sup> The ELGPN aims to assist the European Union (EU) Member States (and the neighbouring countries eligible for the EU Lifelong Learning Programme) and the European Commission in developing European co-operation on lifelong guidance in both the education and the employment sectors. Its purpose is to promote co-operation at Member State level in implementing the priorities identified in the EU Resolutions on Lifelong Guidance (2004; 2008).

1. **Citizen and user involvement.**
2. **Practitioner competence.**
3. **Service improvement.**
4. **Coherence.**
5. **Coverage of sectors.**

WP4 decided to add two further dimensions (outcomes; impact). The framework<sup>13</sup> contains a matrix of “reference points” and indicators, based on an input-process-outcome model, and including suggestions for data to be collected in order to assess how and to what extent the indicator is met. In the next work program 2011-2012 ELGPN building upon the existing Quality Assurance (QA) framework focused on refining it and developing a small common set of quality elements, criteria, indicators and possible sources of data that can be utilised and further developed by policy-makers and other interested parties to jointly assess progress being made in relation to six broad areas of lifelong guidance policy development (schools, vocational education and training (VET), higher education, adult education, employment settings, and social inclusion initiatives). The new framework<sup>14</sup> called **ELGPN Quality Assurance and Evidence (QAE) Framework** can be used:

1. as a simple checklist, to jointly assess and record what information, if any, already exists within a country.
2. To list the sources of data that currently provide the type of information which are available at national, regional and/or local levels and reflect on where gaps exist and how they can be addressed as part of a continuing improvement plan.
3. To identify any known sources of data that could potentially be used by policy-makers that have not been used so far in quality-assurance and impact-assessment developments within a country. This might include, for example, a PISA study report, National Youth Cohort studies, regional assessment reports on lifelong guidance services, local/regional/national kitemark results, etc.
4. To note the context in which these quality elements, criteria and indicators are being applied, where this is possible, i.e. schools, higher education, VET, adult education, public employment services, social inclusion initiatives.
5. To consider whether or not there is scope for improved ‘read across’ to develop more coherent and consistent lifelong guidance policies and practices.

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<sup>13</sup> See annex 5 of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). (2010) *A report on the work of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network 2008-2010*. University of Jyväskylä, Finland and Finnish Institute for Educational Research (FIER), Saarijärvi, Finland.

<sup>14</sup> See annex D of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). (2012) *Lifelong Guidance Policy Development: A European Resource Kit*. University of Jyväskylä, Finland and Finnish Institute for Educational Research (FIER), Saarijärvi, Finland.

ELGPN created also an online **Careers Service Impact Inventory**<sup>15</sup> designed to capture the learning outcomes from careers support activities from a young person's and adult's perspective. In 2014 ELGPN produced a guide aimed primarily at policy-makers in Europe in order to help them address quality assurance and evidence-based policy and system development. The guide titled "**The evidence Base on Lifelong Guidance: a Guide to Key Findings for Effective Policy and Practice**" builds on the Quality-Assurance and Evidence-Base (QAE) Framework synthesising the existing evidence on the impact of lifelong guidance.

- In 2007 EKEP one of the three organizations that in 2011 merged to form EOPPEP (National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance) conducted the study "*International systems for quality assurance in Guidance services*".<sup>16</sup> The study proposes a model system suitable for quality assurance in guidance services of Greece, in particular for the initial and continuous evaluation of Greek guidance services. The **Greek Model System for quality assurance in guidance services** consists of 33 quality criteria divided into 6 groups: **1. Leadership 2. Organizing – planning 3. Guidance practitioners – human resources 4. Client – citizen satisfaction 5. Delivery of services 6. Premises and equipment.** Every criterion of the system is followed by specific indicators and data of evidence. In 2012 EOPPEP conducted the study "*Preparatory study- survey for the observance of quality criteria in career guidance services of the education and initial VET sectors*"<sup>17</sup> aiming to review the work of career guidance services based on the observance or not of certain quality criteria, the investigation of positive and negative features of the services and the presentation of alternative proposals for the organization of the services and the reduction of their cost. The study included a Quality manual with criteria, input-process-output indicators and pieces of evidence according to the improved model system of EOPPEP. The observance of every criterion was estimated based on the kind and number of proposed evidence: Full observance 2, Partial Observance 1, Non observance 0.
- In Greece a **Framework for Quality Assurance of Life Long Learning (abbreviation: P<sup>3</sup>)** was developed by the lifelong learning bodies that consist the National Life Long Learning Network (created according to law 3879/2010) among them EOPPEP. It aims to establish a context of principles for quality assurance of LLL (non-formal education, Initial and Continuous VET and Career Guidance). It consists of **8 quality principles**. Every principle includes dimensions that cover the inputs (strategy, human and financial resources, structures, LLL standards), processes (use of the resources and means, tools and methodologies of career guidance, evaluation, promotion of services) and outputs (knowledge, abilities and skills, reduced school leaving rates,

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<sup>15</sup> See annex 6 of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). (2012) *A report on the work of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network 2011-2012*. University of Jyväskylä, Finland and Finnish Institute for Educational Research (FIER), Saarijärvi, Finland.

<sup>16</sup> Available at: [http://www.eoppep.gr/images/SYEP/Diethni\\_Sys\\_Poiotitas.pdf](http://www.eoppep.gr/images/SYEP/Diethni_Sys_Poiotitas.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Available at [http://www.eoppep.gr/images/SYEP/EOPPEP\\_meleti\\_poiotitas\\_domon\\_syep.pdf](http://www.eoppep.gr/images/SYEP/EOPPEP_meleti_poiotitas_domon_syep.pdf)

finding job according to qualifications and needs of the labour market) of career guidance.

A career guidance service conducts a self-evaluation in an annual base in relation to the observance of dimensions in **5 stations (steps) of quality:**

- 1) Design
- 2) Materialization
- 3) Measuring with the help of main and secondary indicators (quantitative and qualitative)
- 4) Evaluation
- 5) Review

Concerning career guidance EOPPEP has incorporated indicators – criteria developed by the ELGPN for its Common European Quality Assurance Framework. The P<sup>3</sup> was pilot operated at lifelong learning managing and provision bodies, including career guidance services, such as the Career guidance bureaus of the Second Chance Schools and the Private career guidance services (under the law 4111 now called "Centres of Life Long Learning" - KDVM) and is about to be legally established so as to be officially endorsed by lifelong learning providers.

Question and tasks	Issues for reflection and review
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3) What are the main differences between standards, guidelines and frameworks?</li> <li>4) Mention the most important quality assurance systems worldwide</li> <li>5) What are the five common reference points for quality-assurance systems for guidance provision, developed by the EC Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance?</li> <li>6) Think about quality in your organization. Do you evaluate quality and how? (<i>obligatory task</i>)</li> </ol>

### 3.3 The components of a quality assurance system

Short summary of the chapter.

This chapter deals with the circle of quality. It analyses the four steps of the circle with emphasis on designing and measuring values, quality criteria and indicators, possible data and measuring tools. It thus provides basic techniques for structuring a quality assurance system adjusted to the needs of a career guidance service.

According to the most well-known quality assurance theories the quality development process is described as a continuous cycle which combines of four components **ACT, EVALUATE, DEVELOP and PLAN** (Deming et al.). The same circle can be seen from adult experiential learning concept (of Knowles, Kolb, Mezirow, Revans and Schön). The target of



- Occupational and educational information used in career guidance.
- Involvement of citizens and users in the design and delivery of careerservices.

### **3.3.2. QUALITY CRITERIA AND INDICATORS**

The first component of the cycle of quality development “ACT” includes the description of measures to be or have been completed in order to implement something that is in accordance with the purpose or direction reasoned in basis.

The most important measures are quality criteria and indicators<sup>20</sup>.

**Quality criteria** are the details used for referencing the quality of guidance provision and showing that a guidance service or guidance activity meets quality standards. They offer a measure by which something can be judged or decided.

**Quality indicators** are factors or variables that provide simple and reliable means to measure achievement, reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development factor. Quality indicators can also be statistical measures. Den Boer et al. noted that “*Indicators are statistics that allow for value judgements to be made about key aspects of the functioning of systems*”.

#### Example

In order to assure the quality element “*practitioner competence*” a quality criterion could be that practitioners are “*engaged in continuing professional development*”. An indicator could be “*Number of CPD hours undertaken in 1 year at careers practitioner level*”

Indicators can be **Quantitative** or **Qualitative**<sup>21</sup>.

- Quantitative indicators are mainly numerical figure(s) or ratio(s) or statistics used as yardsticks to judge and assess quality performance e.g. percentage of client satisfaction from a career guidance service or the number of customers who obtained employment after guidance services.
- Qualitative indicators on the contrary put emphasis more on the existence of a measure than on figures. E.g. that customer satisfaction surveys are carried out on a regular basis. Qualitative evidence might be provided by interviews with clients about their experience of using the service carried out by an independent researcher.

According to ELGPN designing a QA framework based on mostly quantitative indicators is quite ambitious. In addition, there is the danger of unintended effects if QA is exclusively

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<sup>20</sup> For definitions of these terms see Jackson, C. (Ed.) (2012). ELGPN Glossary, ELGPN, Jyväskylä, Finland page 19,24 and Vuorinen, R. & Rantamaki, J. (2009). *Vocabulary and manual for (quality circle) developmental quality assurance. (Background paper for the ELGPN WP4 meeting Berlin 13-14 May 2009)*. University of Jyväskylä, Finnish Institute for Educational Research.

<sup>21</sup> Cedefop’s study on Indicators and benchmarks for Life Long Guidance argues that information expressed in numbers (quantitative) can be used as an indicator and information expressed as narrative (qualitative) cannot (appendix 1). However ELGPN’s work has shown that both qualitative and quantitative indicators are needed. See: European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). (2010) A report on the work of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network 2008-2010. University of Jyväskylä, Finland and Finnish Institute for Educational Research (FIER), Saarijarvi, Finland, page 57.

directed towards quantitative measurement. This may be the case if a guidance service is exclusively measured by school drop-out rates or by the number of graduates. There has to be a fair balance between the professional need for qualitative evaluation, and the demand of policy-makers and service managers for empirical evidence and cost-benefit analysis, which is needed to justify the investment of tax payer's money into lifelong career guidance services.

Indicators can also be distinguished between **Input, Process and Output** indicators.

- The input indicators are Data that provide a quantitative or qualitative measure of the human, financial and physical resources used for a guidance intervention.
- The process indicators are data concerning the use of the resources and means, the tools and methodologies of career guidance, evaluation of career guidance services, promotion of services etc
- The output indicators are data concerning the outcomes and impacts of career guidance in learning, economic and social terms

Developing indicators to assess the performance of both guidance activities and guidance services is an important component in the development of lifelong guidance policy. Indicator creation process should happen before any concrete measures are executed. Commonly indicators are formed ex post facto which is problematic from their argumentation's point of view.

An indicator or criteria can be formed e.g. as an answer to questions:

- 1) *What kind of visible and explicit (which can be documented) measures indicate that*
  - *it can be identified that the respective action is fulfilling the aims expressed in the basis of the circle of quality (see picture above) and that the respective actions are proceeding in desired direction*
  - *the actions is prevailing or preventing the fulfilment of the aims expressed in the basis.*
- 2) *What qualitative or quantitative measures provide evidence that inputs, procedures and outputs of an organization have met specific standards set e.g. that specific arrangements exist, desirable activities have been implemented, certain methodologies have been followed and specific outcomes have been achieved?*

**Connection of a value and its indicator has to be clear and sound. If an indicator or criteria has no or has doubtful connection(s) to the element within the basis respectively it is causing "noise" in the evaluation process<sup>22</sup>.**

When examining the connections between the indicators and basic values it is useful to utilise peer learning activities and benchmarking. **Benchmarking** is a process by which we compare indicators across organizations and different types of service delivery and ultimately across national borders

### **3.3.3. POSSIBLE DATA AND MEASURING TOOLS**

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<sup>22</sup> See Vuorinen, R. & Rantamaki, J. (2009) as above, page 3

The second component of the cycle of quality development “EVALUATE” begins with the description of measuring tools or examples of possible data with which we can prove or measure the indicators. For example in order to prove that customer satisfaction surveys are carried out on a regular basis a possible source of data could be the client records where we should look for the actual filled questionnaires of the client survey, the details concerning the frequency of the survey etc.

At this component we are putting an emphasis on measuring the indicators and evaluating the measurements. Questions that we can ask ourselves are the following:

- 1) *Have you gathered data that prove that the indicator has been measured?*
- 2) *What are the measurements?*
- 3) *How do you evaluate these measurements? (Are they positive or negative?)*
- 4) *For how many of the selected indicators there are positive trends?*
- 5) *For how many of the selected indicators the targets have been met?*
- 6) *For how many of the selected indicators the service has done better than other services?*
- 7) *Was the realization of measures an answer for the question what should have been done?*
- 8) *Were the moment and time spent in action fit for the purpose?*
- 9) *Have the methods used implemented needs, values and principles (basis)?*
- 10) *Were skills of the people that implemented the actions fit for the purpose?*
- 11) *Have the measures taken benefited the target group(s)?*
- 12) *What are your strengths and weaknesses?*

#### **3.3.4. DEVELOPING NEW MEASURES AND PLANNING NEW ACTIVITIES**

The next component of the cycle of quality “DEVELOP” demands the recognition of new services or actions or decisions that have to be taken according to the findings of the evaluation stage. The following questions can be helpful:

- 1) *Have you recognised improvement measures? For how many of the selected quality criteria?*
- 2) *What actions or target groups have you missed so far?*
- 3) *For how many of the selected quality criteria there is a clear and well documented policy?*
- 4) *How many of the selected activities are based on the findings of the evaluation?*

Finally the last component of the cycle of quality “PLAN” refers to the specific planning of improvement measures. Resources, suitable time, frequency, duration and specific actions must be described at this stage. The following indicative questions can be asked.

- 1) *What should be done? Why these measures?*
- 2) *When should be done?*
- 3) *Who should do this?*
- 4) *Whom is this for?*

5) *What are the resources needed?*

Question and tasks	Issues for reflection and review
	<p>7) Fill in the 4 electronic forms that correspond to the 4 components of the circle of quality in the following order ACT-EVALUATE-DEVELOP-PLAN by asking yourself the indicative questions found in the textbook (To be able to fill a component it is necessary to have filled the previous one) <b>(obligatory task - interactive)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ACT</b> By consulting the model quality assurance system of the textbook select 1-2 criteria and describe suitable quality indicators you can measure in your organization</li> <li>• <b>EVALUATE</b> Start measuring the indicators. Consult the column “possible data” of the model quality assurance system of the textbook.</li> <li>• <b>DEVELOP</b> Recognize new services or actions or decisions that have to be taken according to the findings of the evaluation stage.</li> <li>• <b>PLAN</b> Plan your improvement measures.</li> </ul>

### 3.4 Outcomes and Impacts of Career Guidance

Short summary of the chapter.  
This chapter deals with outcomes and impacts of career guidance. It analyses most important levels and sorts of outcomes and impacts for the purpose of designing outcome indicators.

Since demonstrating the added value returns of career guidance for individuals, communities and societies is all the more connected with public investments in career guidance, outcome and impact indicators for measurement come to the forefront.

There is an extensive research base on lifelong guidance<sup>23</sup> which highlights a range of levels of impact, the most important being:

- **educational outcomes**
- **economic and employment outcomes**

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<sup>23</sup> Deirdre Hughes, Mark Savickas, Gillie & Isenhour, Bimrose et al etc have researched the theme of evidence and impact in career guidance.

- **social outcomes**

Guidance impacts on a range of different areas in different ways for different beneficiaries. The table below shows how these interact and build on each other, in all of the sectors where guidance can be found. So, for example, a guidance intervention with an unemployed worker can support that worker to improve his education, re-engage with the labour market and become more socially included. Such impacts are experienced by the individual, but also have benefits at broader political and economic levels. Careers Scotland gives a list of outcomes and impacts of career guidance in learning, economic and social level. As can be seen in the table “**outcomes**” have more immediate meaning (e.g. an outcome of organized career guidance is higher attainment in education due to improved motivation and better self-awareness while «**impacts**» are the consequence of outcomes (e.g. higher attainment in education has the impact of these people being offered higher wages in the labour market Both outcomes and impacts can be observed on an individual level, organisational level, and on a societal/economic level.

**Career guidance leads to improved:**

***Learning outcomes***

- Greater access to learning and training
- Greater participation in learning and training
- Improved retention rates in education and training
- Greater education and training attainment and higher level skills
- Improved motivation and hence attainment in education and training

***Learning impacts***

- Higher wage levels through gaining higher qualifications

***Economic outcomes***

- Higher levels of participation in employment
- Lower levels of unemployment
- Improved job tenure through increased motivation at work
- A more responsive and flexible workforce
- Improvements in the employability of individuals

***Economic impacts***

- Higher wage levels
- Improved productivity

***Social outcomes***

- Increased confidence
- Increased well-being which contributes to health benefits for society
- Reductions in crime and offending behaviour
- Greater levels of social inclusion

***Social impacts***

- Reductions in lost earnings and lower productivity through lost education and training
- Reductions in social security, public health costs and other public costs

Source: Careers Scotland (2007).

Outcomes can be distinguished between **Hard outcomes** and **Soft outcomes**.

- Hard outcomes can include tangible changes in work, learning or training.
- Soft outcomes may involve changes in attitudes to work, training and learning, e.g. having more confidence, increased awareness, motivation, and more clarity around options.

Outcomes can also be distinguished between:

- **immediate or short term outcomes** (self-awareness, decision-making skills and knowledge of opportunities),
- **intermediate outcomes** (educational achievement or dependency upon welfare benefits)
- **longer - term outcomes** (for the individual, economy and society).

There is some empirical evidence to suggest that career guidance generally can have a positive impact on short-term learning outcomes. However, as the OECD report<sup>24</sup> comments: *“Evidence on the impact of career guidance upon medium-term behavioural outcomes is less robust, but generally positive. Evidence on longer-term impacts is very limited, and will need better longitudinal research.”*

Most research to date on the effectiveness of interventions has been short-term and focused on immediate effects, or on attitudinal change (for an overview, see <http://www.guidance-research.org/EG/benefits/ebg>). The single most common finding is that career guidance interventions have a positive effect on participant satisfaction.

In 2014 ELGPN developed a guide that synthesises the existing evidence on the impact of lifelong guidance and suggests how policy-makers might want to make use of this evidence and contribute to its development<sup>25</sup>. The guide discusses the evidence base and key impacts that have been identified in relation to guidance in Life Long Learning and in the Labour Market and stresses that guidance services which have impact:

- focus on the individual;
- support learning and progression;
- ensure quality.

These can be developed as ten evidence-based principles for service design and development.

Focus on the individual	Support learning and progression	Ensure quality
1) Lifelong guidance is most effective where it is	4) Lifelong guidance is not one intervention, but	8) The skills, training and dispositions of the

<sup>24</sup> OECD (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap*. Paris: OECD.

<sup>25</sup> Hooley, T. (2014) *The Evidence Base on Lifelong Guidance: a Guide to Key Findings for Effective Policy and Practice*. A product of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN), page 13-16

<p>genuinely lifelong and progressive.</p> <p>2) Lifelong guidance is most effective where it connects meaningfully to the wider experience and lives of the individuals who participate in it.</p> <p>3) Lifelong guidance is most effective where it is able to recognise the diversity of individuals and to provide services relevant to individual needs.</p>	<p>many, and works most effectively when a range of interventions are combined.</p> <p>5) A key aim of lifelong guidance programmes should be the acquisition of career management skills.</p> <p>6) Lifelong guidance needs to be holistic and well-integrated into other support services.</p> <p>7) Lifelong guidance should involve employers and working people, and provide active experiences of workplaces.</p>	<p>practitioners who deliver lifelong guidance are critical to its success.</p> <p>9) Lifelong guidance is dependent on access to good-quality career information.</p> <p>10) Lifelong guidance should be quality-assured and evaluated to ensure its effectiveness and to support continuous improvement.</p>
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Question and tasks	Issues for reflection and review
	<p>8) What are the most important levels of outcomes of career guidance?</p> <p>9) Please describe the short outcomes of your career service for the client (<b>obligatory task</b>)</p> <p>10) How do you measure these outcomes? (<b>obligatory task</b>)</p> <p>11) Are you thinking of following a specific quality assurance system in your organization and why? (<b>obligatory task</b>)</p>

### 3.5 A model quality assurance system

Short summary of the chapter.  
 This chapter proposes a model quality assurance system consisted of five groups of quality criteria. Each group contains specific quality criteria, each measured with quality indicators and supported by certain data that prove the observance and measurement of the indicator.

Below you will find a quality assurance system for the evaluation of quality procedures followed by a career guidance service. The system is based on the analysis of existent quality assurance systems presented in this textbook and especially on the Greek Model System for Quality Assurance of Guidance Services and the Quality Assurance Framework (QAE) developed by the ELGPN. The framework is consisted of 5 groups of quality criteria:

#### Group 1: Provision of Career Guidance Services



**Group 2: Human Resources**

**Group 3: Organization of the Service**

**Group 4: Premises – Equipment**

**Group 5: Client Satisfaction**

Every criterion is followed by a description of its necessity, role and aim in the quality process, a list of qualitative and/or quantitative indicators as well as possible data that guide the career guidance service or the professional who is responsible for inserting quality assurance procedures in the organization to specific kinds and sources of data that support the measurement of indicators. For every criterion the service or the professional must follow all 4 phases of the quality circle ACT-EVALUATE-DEVELOP and PLAN

<b>Quality Criteria Group 1: Provision of Career Guidance Services</b>	
<p><b>1.1. Promotion of the service</b>            The Service promotes its activities to the public in a systematic way with the help of suitable methods and material adjusted to the characteristics of different target groups (including socially vulnerable target groups e.g. people with disabilities, immigrants etc.). Different media are used (internet, meetings, exhibitions etc). Identifying people not using the Service should be the first step. The Service should think how can promotional material best be distributed to potential users</p>	
Indicators	Possible data
Promotional (marketing) strategy that includes the aims, methodology and means of promotion, together with the variety of promotional activities during the year that will meet those aims. This is reviewed annually and revised if necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ promotional plan</li> </ul>
Development and distribution of promotional material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ promotional material electronic or printed informing about the aim, services offered, target groups, actions and tools used etc</li> </ul>
Keeping and updating a website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ website in operation - url</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organization of promotional meetings either alone or in cooperation with other career guidance services and stakeholders  <i>(E.g. a career guidance service co-organizes a meeting together with the school of its neighborhood in order to promote its services to the students and their parents)</i></li> <li>• number of meetings per year (quantitative indicator)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ meeting program</li> <li>▪ lists of participants</li> <li>▪ meeting presentations</li> </ul>
number of citizens/users accessing the services (quantitative indicator) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on the web (nos. of visits including differing types of careers support services being accessed);</li> <li>• by telephone (nos. of callers);</li> <li>• individual sessions (nos. of clients);</li> <li>• group sessions (nos. of clients)</li> </ul>	Client records with calculations of number of citizens accessing the services
<p><b>1.2. Appropriate guidance methodology</b>            The service uses appropriate guidance methods and tools relevant to the purpose of counselling and the target groups for which they are used.</p>	

(e.g. face to face meetings, group meetings, assessment tools (e.g. psychometric tests, inventories etc. that measure the abilities, interests, values etc. of client))	
Indicators	Possible data
face to face counselling interview to provide support to the clients in planning and managing their careers (assess the needs of the clients, provide information, support the self-awareness, decision making etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Filled forms of counselling interviews</li> <li>▪ Client reports</li> <li>▪ Client records</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group meetings</li> <li>• career guidance workshops</li> <li>• career guidance seminars</li> </ul> <p><i>(E.g. a university career office is organizing frequent career guidance workshops on several subjects that are important for the transition of students and graduates to the labour market e.g. job search techniques, developing career management skills etc)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ meeting program</li> <li>▪ lists of participants</li> <li>▪ training material</li> </ul>
Use of valid and standardized assessment tools (e.g. psychometric tests, inventories etc. that measure the abilities, interests, values etc. of client)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ results of the assessments</li> <li>▪ Client profiles</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.3. Information provision</b></p> <p><b>The service provides valid, up to date information to all target groups using appropriate methods, means and material. The service should make information available using a range of technologies and appropriate methods. There should be a simple procedure to enable students with disabilities to use the information. The service should hold information in a range of formats and media.</b></p>	
Indicators	Possible data
Collection, classification and evaluation of information on educational / training / employment opportunities, learning pathways, characteristics of national and international labour market, occupations and their requirements, recognition of formal and informal learning etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Electronic Databases of learning or employment opportunities in use</li> <li>▪ Library with books covering career guidance subjects, job profiles, curriculum guides, laws and regulations of diplomas and certificates etc</li> </ul>

<p>Organization of informational meetings that provide information regarding educational paths and learning opportunities, labour market needs and opportunities etc. <i>E.g. a career guidance service is organizing career days that aim to familiarize students with the various professions of maritime industry.</i> <i>Number of informational meetings (quantitative indicator)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Program of the meetings</li> <li>▪ List of attendants</li> </ul>
<p>Development of informational material aiming to support clients in developing their career plans or taking career decisions</p>	<p>Informational booklets on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ education system</li> <li>▪ needs of the labour market or professions in demand</li> <li>▪ mobility tools</li> <li>▪ entrepreneurial opportunities</li> <li>▪ European initiatives for education and training</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.4. Referral of clients</b> The service refers its clients when necessary to other services better placed to support them. Referral is a key process in ensuring client's needs is being met.</p>	
<p><b>Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>Possible data</b></p>
<p>Development and implementation of a certain procedure which specifies in which cases and under which conditions a client should be referred either internally or externally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Referral records</li> <li>▪ Referring forms</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.5. Keeping the code of ethics</b> The Service observes the rules of the Code of Ethics for guidance services.</p>	
<p><b>Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>Possible data</b></p>
<p>Commitment to the observance of the Code of Ethics and implementation of a procedure for checking <i>E.g. A career guidance service informs its clients in its brochure that it follows specific ethical standards concerning for example confidentiality and that clients have the right to complain if they think confidentiality rights have been violated.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Statement of Entitlement</li> <li>▪ Complaint forms</li> </ul>

Quality Criteria Group 2: Human Resources	
<p><b>2.1. Practitioner competence</b>            Guidance counselors have the competence needed to perform the guidance tasks they are called on to undertake. Practitioner Competence is the cornerstone of quality assurance in career guidance, a key to the successful delivery of guidance services. Services need to define what “competence” means for them and their staff. If legislative requirements in order to work as a career guidance counselor exist, e.g. if counselors must follow an accreditation - licensing procedure, then the service should employ only accredited licensed counselors. In case the service chooses to train its counselors in house then it should also follow all legislative procedures for accrediting them.</p>	
Indicators	Possible data
Implementation of a selection procedure which ensures that the counselors employed have the qualifications and experience needed to perform their tasks or they are accredited according to national legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ formal and informal qualifications gained from training and professional experience</li> <li>▪ National regulations / legislative requirements</li> <li>▪ Career Counselors’ National register</li> <li>▪ Evaluation forms or minutes</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.2. Continuous professional development of guidance counselors</b>            The service is providing opportunities for continuous training to its counselors according to their personal training needs. Guidance staff needs to be continuously supported to develop their professional, personal skills and knowledge and to effectively measure their performance. The Service should have plan a mechanism for the continuous development of its staff.</p>	
Indicators	Possible data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization of continuous training seminars in order to up-grade the skills and experience of counselors</li> <li>• Annual Costs for training seminars (quantitative)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Program of training seminars</li> <li>▪ Training material</li> <li>▪ Lists of trainees</li> </ul>
Provision of training opportunities to the counselors outside the service <i>E.g. A career guidance service has applied for an Academia exchange program and 3 of its counselors have participated in a training visit in a career guidance service for disadvantaged job seekers in UK</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Documents that prove the agreement between the guidance service and the training body</li> <li>▪ Training course curriculum</li> <li>▪ Training evaluation reports</li> </ul>
Career guidance counselors themselves take the initiative for participating in training opportunities outside the framework of their organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proofs of participation to training seminars</li> <li>▪ Approval of training of employee by the guidance service</li> <li>▪ Correspondence between the guidance service and the training body</li> </ul>

<p><i>E.g. A career guidance counselor has asked the permission to participate in a training seminar for developing career management skills of individuals</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training course curriculum</li> <li>▪ Training evaluation reports</li> </ul>
<p>Nos. of CPD hours undertaken in 1 year at a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• careers practitioner level</li> <li>• manager of career development services level</li> </ul> <p>(Quantitative indicator)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ National database</li> <li>▪ Outsourcing reports</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.3. Evaluation of performance of guidance counselors</b>  <b>The service is evaluating the performance of its guidance counselors. Assessment of the work of guidance personnel is essential for service improvement. The Service should evaluate its staff at least annually, giving them feedback necessary for improvement. The Service should evaluate staff competence in practice, when practitioners actually do the job.</b></p>	
<p><b>Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>Possible data</b></p>
<p>Implementation of a specific procedure or an appraisal system to ensure that the staff have the appropriate skills, knowledge, behaviors and attitudes to enable them to deliver the guidance services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ written description of the appraisal system</li> <li>▪ Filled evaluation forms</li> <li>▪ Performance targets</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.4. Employment of necessary auxiliary staff.</b>  <b>The Service employs necessary auxiliary staff for the effective delivery of services. (e.g. executive and managerial staff, financial staff, technical staff)</b></p>	
<p><b>Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>Possible data</b></p>
<p>Implementation of a selection procedure for the employment of the necessary auxiliary staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personnel chart</li> <li>▪ documents that prove the number and qualifications of auxiliary staff</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.5. Motivation of the staff.</b>  <b>Staff motivation is a very important factor in accomplishing the aims and targets of a guidance Service. The Service should have plan a system for creating and offering incentives to its staff. This way staff will be satisfied with its work and will work towards personal development.</b></p>	
<p><b>Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>Possible data</b></p>
<p>Implementation of a system for staff motivation  <i>E.g. members of the staff could be involved in drawing up of policies and practices for delivery of the service.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Description of the system</li> </ul>

<b>Quality Criteria Group 3: Organization of the Service</b>	
<b>3.1 Transparency of the service</b>	
<b>The mission, aims and objectives (including those for specific groups of users), target groups and policy of the Service are fully and clearly described to potential users.</b>	
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Possible data</b>
<p>a Statement of Service covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mission statement</li> <li>• statement of aims and objectives</li> <li>• what each group of users should expect from the Service</li> <li>• the principles of guidance provision met by the Service (e.g. details of the confidentiality and equality practices)</li> <li>• information on the methodology used and the competences of the staff delivering the guidance services</li> <li>• information for the user regarding their entitlement</li> </ul> <p>The Service should consider different Statements of Service, for example one for parents, another for employers etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ promotional material (either printed or electronic available on the website)</li> <li>▪ legal document establishing the Service</li> <li>▪ Informational booklets, leaflets etc.</li> </ul>
<b>3.2 Co-operation / Networking of the Service</b>	
<b>The Service cooperates with all relevant stakeholders at local, national and international level in order to achieve its aims (cooperation covers strategies, service delivery)</b>	
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Possible data</b>
<p>1. Development of a network of bodies relevant to guidance e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supervising bodies (ministries, licensing bodies etc)</li> <li>• other career guidance services</li> <li>• social services</li> <li>• local self – government bodies</li> <li>• private enterprises</li> <li>• employers and employer’s associations</li> <li>• teachers</li> <li>• students and student’s associations</li> <li>• educational institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Statement of Service</li> <li>▪ memoranda of understanding</li> <li>▪ written agreements with stakeholders</li> <li>▪ agendas - minutes of stakeholder meetings / congresses</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>parent's associations</li> </ul> <p>The cooperation of the Service with the above agencies and its participation to the network must be mentioned in the Statement of Service.</p> <p>2. Number of cooperation agreements (quantitative indicator)</p>	
<p><b>3.3 Use of modern ICT technologies</b></p> <p>The Service has a specific policy for the use of modern ICT technologies in the organization and delivery of services (e.g. databases, e-counselling etc)</p>	
<p><b>Indicator</b></p>	<p><b>Possible data</b></p>
<p>Implementation of a specific policy and mechanism for the procurement, development and use of modern ICT technologies both in the management and delivery of the Services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>description of the mechanism, standards etc</li> <li>proofs from the procurement or upgrade of software and hardware etc (receipts, contracts)</li> <li>ICT technologies in operation and showcased in possible external evaluation</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.4 Management of the service</b></p> <p>The Service is managed in such a way that aims are accomplished and resources are effectively used</p>	
<p><b>Indicator</b></p>	<p><b>Possible data</b></p>
<p>Management system and structure that abides to the principles of modern management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personnel chart</li> <li>Operating rules</li> <li>Statute of the service</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.5 Planning of the service</b></p> <p>The Service follows a process of operational planning. It plans its activities against its aims and objectives. The planning could be short – term, medium – term or long – term.</p>	
<p><b>Indicator</b></p>	<p><b>Possible data</b></p>
<p>Implementation of a system or specific procedures for planning the activities with the participation of all staff and organization departments. Planning is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The needs of its clients</li> <li>The results of monitoring and evaluation of the service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operational plan with quantitative and qualitative aims</li> </ul>

<p><b>3.6 Monitoring and evaluation of the service</b></p> <p>The Service monitors and reviews its activities against its aims and objectives. The implementation of plans should be monitored and reviewed in order to ensure that objectives are attained. That’s why the Service should have a system of self – assessment and self – development. The description of the system should include the methodology of self – assessment. The Service should take user and staff evaluation of activities into account.</p>	
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Possible data</b>
Implementation of a system of monitoring and evaluation of the efficiency of its activities. The implementation of plans should be monitored and reviewed at least every four months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ written description of the evaluation system</li> <li>▪ monitoring forms</li> <li>▪ results of self-assessment</li> <li>▪ external evaluation reports</li> <li>▪ client evaluation surveys</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.7 Measurement of the outcomes of the service</b></p> <p>The service implements a system for documenting the outcomes for the individual, the economy and the society (Learning outcomes, Labour market/economy outcomes, Social inclusion outcomes)</p>	
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Possible data</b>
Percentage of users progressing into employment, education/ training according to their personal characteristics and the needs of the labour market (society)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Longitudinal studies</li> <li>▪ Control Group studies</li> <li>▪ Client records</li> <li>▪ Pre and post- treatment assessments</li> <li>▪ Information captured by careers practitioners</li> </ul>
nos of individuals no longer claiming benefits as a direct result of specific intervention (society)	
nos of reduced drop-out rates from schooling, Further education or Higher Education (society, economy, individual)	
Improvement of client’s competencies and confidence level	
higher earnings/ salary	

<b>Quality Criteria Group 4: Premises and Equipment</b>	
<b>4.1 Premises</b>	
The service is housed at premises and provides accommodation appropriate for the people using them and for the staff delivering the service. Delivery of guidance services requires special accommodation. For instance there should be a reasonable amount of privacy available to ensure the confidentiality of guidance interviews.	
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Possible data</b>
Premises and accommodation should be in conformity with existent legislation on issues of health, safety and required area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ inspection of premises and accommodation (on the spot)</li> <li>▪ drawings</li> </ul>
<b>4.2 Equipment</b>	
The service uses equipment (furnishings, telecommunication equipment) that is appropriate for the target groups, sufficient to deliver the stated service and effectively maintained. Training in the use of any equipment should be made available for staff and service users.	
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Possible data</b>
Equipment meets health and safety requirements and remains useable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inspection of equipment (on the spot) e.g. how accessible is the desks and library shelving to citizens with disabilities?</li> <li>▪ receipts of procurement or technical support of the equipment</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Criteria Group 5: Client Satisfaction</b>	
<b>5.1. Investigation of client needs</b>	
The service investigates the needs of its clients. Services should ensure that what is on offer is what clients need. They must answer the basic question “What do they want from us?” Identifying and then offering services needed by the citizen is the most important tool for widening participation.	
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Possible data</b>
Implementation of a system for investigating client needs that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ regular client needs surveys</li> <li>➤ collection of needs through the web-site, meetings organized by the service, shows and congresses etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proofs of the client needs surveys (filled questionnaires)</li> <li>▪ Correspondence with clients</li> <li>▪ Complaint forms</li> </ul>
<b>5.2. Investigation of client satisfaction</b>	
The service ensures users are regularly consulted on their satisfaction with the services provided.	

Indicator	Possible data
<p>Implementation of a system for investigating client satisfaction that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ regular (at agreed set intervals e.g. 3, 6 and/or 12 months+) client satisfaction surveys online and off-line</li> <li>➤ satisfaction questionnaires filled by clients on special occasions e.g. meetings, training seminars organized by the service, shows and congresses etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proofs of the client satisfaction surveys (filled questionnaires)</li> <li>▪ Correspondence with clients</li> <li>▪ Complaint forms</li> </ul>
<p>An agreed level of client satisfaction expressed as a percentage (%) (quantitative)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Client survey responses</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.3. Feedback used in improving services.</b>  <b>Exploring the needs and satisfaction of people accessing the service is not enough. The service should plan and deliver services directly proportional to such findings.</b></p>	
Indicator	Possible data
<p>Implementation of a mechanism that makes systematic use of the findings from client surveys.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action plan</li> </ul>

Question and tasks	Issues for reflection and review
	<p>12) You plan to start introducing a quality assurance system for your organization. Which of the above criteria are you at a position to influence? Which other services or persons can influence the quality or performance of your organization?</p> <p><b>13)</b> Start by selecting a few criteria you can measure and conduct a self-evaluation in relation to the 4 phases of the quality circle</p> <p>Example: <b>Investigation of client needs</b> <u>Act</u>: Investigate client needs by conducting regular client needs surveys. <u>Evaluate</u>: By analysing the filled questionnaires or relevant collected data of the surveys which needs are the most important and urgent ones? If you already cover some needs which were the targets for the last 3 years? <u>Develop</u>: Can you recognise new services that satisfy the above needs? <u>Plan</u>: Start planning relevant activities and take certain measures</p> <p>14) What the strengths and weaknesses of your service?</p>

## 4 Assessment procedure

**Successful completion of the module is conditional upon:**

- Attendance at face-to-face sessions.
- Successful completion of 4 out of 5 obligatory tasks No 6, 7, 9, 10, 11. Completion of the tasks will be evaluated by the tutor on scale 1-100. All obligatory tasks as well as other tasks chosen by the trainee will be prepared by the trainee and his answers/work will be uploaded by him to the inno-career training platform before the final assessment procedure.
- Successful pass of a written test which will evaluate the competences acquired by the trainee. It will include 10 multiple choice questions and 1 open question. For a successful pass, 80% of the questions (9 questions) must be answered correctly. The test will be evaluated by the tutor on scale 1-100. The test will be given to the trainees by the tutor of the module at the final assessment phase of the program. The day of the final assessment will be set by the organizers of the training program.
- Filling in an online self-evaluation questionnaire containing multiple choice and open questions aiming to assess the learning outcomes before and after the module training. Before the start of the training at the particular module trainees will complete the questionnaire to make the initial assessment of their competences. After the end of the training and until the final assessment phase they will complete the same questionnaire with the aim to assess changes that happened as a result of the participation at the training program.

### **Final assessment procedure**

The final (summative) assessment procedure of the trainee consists of a:

- Written essay on a training module chosen by the trainee. If the trainee chooses this module he must choose one of the following topics:
  - Basic quality criteria and indicators for career guidance at European and international level.
  - Description of the quality assurance procedures in your organization.
  - Main issues that quality needs to address in a national level. Relevant proposals
  - Description of a quality assurance system (standard) of your choice.



The essay must have a length of 15-20 standard pages minimum including bibliography, tables and contents. One standard page is 1800 characters with spaces. The essay must be uploaded by the trainee to the inno-career training platform before the final assessment phase.

OR alternatively

- Simulation of a counselling session combining the theory and practice of a module chosen by the trainee. If the trainee chooses this module he must cooperate with another trainee having chosen the same module. At the final assessment phase the two trainees will play the role of counsellor – counselee and vice versa. The simulation will last approximately 1 hour/couple. The goal is to create an environment very similar to the working one in order to better evaluate the participant's skills in practice. (Competency-based training). The simulation will be evaluated by the tutor of the module.

## 5 Indicative reading list

CEDEFOP (2005). *Improving lifelong guidance policies and systems. Using common European reference tools*

CEDEFOP (2005). *Study on Indicators and benchmarks for Life Long Guidance*

EKEP (2007). *International Systems for Quality Assurance of Guidance Services. A model system for quality Assurance of public and private guidance services*

EOPPEP (2012). *Preparatory study-survey for the observance of quality criteria in career guidance services of the education and initial VET sectors*

European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). (2012) *Life guidance policy development: A European Resource kit*. University of Jyväskylä, Finland and Finnish Institute for Educational Research (FIER), Saarijärvi, Finland.

European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). (2010) *A report on the work of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network 2008-2010*. University of Jyväskylä, Finland and Finnish Institute for Educational Research (FIER), Saarijärvi, Finland.

European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). (2012) *A report on the work of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network 2011-2012*. University of Jyväskylä, Finland and Finnish Institute for Educational Research (FIER), Saarijärvi, Finland.

Hooley, T. (2014) *The Evidence Base on Lifelong Guidance: a Guide to Key Findings for Effective Policy and Practice. A product of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN)*

Haché L., Redekopp D., Jarvis P. (2006) *Blueprint for Life. The quick reference guide*.

Jackson, C. (Ed.) (2012). *ELGPN Glossary*. ELGPN, Jyväskylä, Finland.

OECD/EU (2004). *Career Guidance. A handbook for Policy Makers*

Plant P. (2001) *Quality in Career Guidance*. OECD.

Plant P. (2009) *Quality in Careers Education and Guidance. A paper prepared for ELGPN*

Rantamäki, J. & Vuorinen, R. (2009). *Vocabulary and manual for quality circle developmental quality assurance*. (Background paper for the ELGPN WP4 meeting Berlin 13-14 May 2009), University of Jyväskylä, Finnish Institute for Educational Research.

**Quality assurance issues in career guidance**  
**Study Module No 06 of INNO-CAREER project**

<b>Project:</b>	INNO-CAREER: Develop Prototype Training System of Career Guidance Counsellors - 20132-1-GR1-LEO05-13878
<b>Partners:</b>	EOPPEP Leading partner (Greece), EURICON Consultans LTD (Greece), Cyprus Labour Institute (INEK – PEO) (Cyprus), Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per il Veneto (Italy), National Training Fund, o.p.s. (Czech Republic).
<b>Funding:</b>	Lifelong Learning Programme – Sub Programme Leonardo da Vinci, Transfer of Innovation (75% Lifelong Learning Program – 25% National Fund).
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<b>Manager:</b>	Gaitanis Dimitrios, Head of Counselling & Vocational Guidance Counselors & Provider’s Scientific Support Department.

**Scientific Editing :** Gaitanis Dimitrios, Head of Counselling & Vocational Guidance Counselors & Provider’s Scientific Support Department.

**Version :** Final

**Number of Pages:** 35

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*“This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication - communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.”*