

# Guiding From School to Job

Professionalism in the Work with Young  
People at Risk of Social Exclusion

**The paths of young people into  
work: a review of guidance needs  
in Europe**

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*guiding* 

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## Professionalism in the Work With Young People at Risk of Social Exclusion

“Leonardo Guiding” is a pilot project of 10 organisations from 8 different European countries. The project focuses on filling the need for education and training of pedagogical staff in vocational education programmes for young people at risk of social exclusion. The project responds to the specific need of vocational training staff for professional guidance and counselling skills.

Throughout Europe, guidance and counselling systems have evolved and, with them, the quality standards which counsellors must fulfil. Guidance and counselling staff need professional skills to meet rising demands. The traditional roles of vocational education staff are changing, regardless of their individual function within their particular national support system – teacher, trainer, social worker, tutor.

Pedagogy in the vocational training sector requires a range of guidance skills – counselling, identifying strengths and weaknesses, information management, etc. This is especially true in the work with young people who are between school and job and at risk of social exclusion. Their primary contact person remains the teacher or trainer. The basic and continuing education of vocational education staff does not sufficiently consider the teachers’, trainers’ and other support staff’s need for guidance skills to meet the individual needs of the young people they serve.

The project began in October 2005 and will run until September 2007.

### The project “Guiding” shall result in:

1. A comparative survey of counselling, guidance and orientation systems in the partner countries represented in the project
2. A compilation of good practice examples in guidance and training in guidance from the different partner countries
3. The definition of competencies needed for good practice in guidance training and guidance for young people on their way from school to work
4. A model of variables to aid the effective transfer of practices from one country to another

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Programme

# Partner Organisations:

- Bildungsmarkt vulkan gGmbH – Berlin / D  
*Non-profit training company*
- Fachhochschule Potsdam (FHP), Fachbereich Sozialwesen – Potsdam / D  
*University of Applied Sciences, Department of Social Work*
- Gesellschaft für berufsbildende Maßnahmen (GFBM) e.V. – Berlin / D  
*Non-profit training company*
- Jyväskylän ammattikorkeakoulu Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden tiedekunta, Sosiaalialan koulutusohjelma  
*Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences, School of Health and Social Studies*
- École Supérieure de Travail Social (ETSUP) – Paris / F  
*Superior School of Social Work*
- Ass For Seo srl. – Roma / I  
*Non-profit training company*
- Hogeschool van Amsterdam (HvA), Instituut Hoger Juridisch Onderwijs / NL  
*University of Amsterdam, School of Law*
- Europejskie Centrum Edukacyjne w Opolu sp. z.o o. (ECEO) – Opole / PL  
*European Centre for Education; Non-profit training company*
- Farkom Ltd. – Istanbul / TR  
*Training company*
- University of London, Institute of Education (IoE) – London / GB

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## 1 Introduction

This report is concerned with the labour market integration of young people, and the institutions and services put in place to guide young people along the route from education to employment. Supporting the process of integration in the labour market involves 'matching the qualifications of individuals with job requirements, and helping to solve problems in a process through which individuals choose the career that best fits their inclination and situation, acquire the educational qualifications required for this career, are placed in a job and adjust to it' (TR).<sup>1</sup> Professional advice and support for this process takes a number of forms, is located at different points in young people's path of transition, and is offered within various state and NGO institutions by professionals from a variety of disciplines.

The objective of this publication is, through the synthesis of the expert knowledge of the project partners, 'to formulate together a range of basic requirements to any guidance training offer for our targeted educational staff... These requirements ... constitute criteria for us to select useful examples of best practice that may be transferable among our contexts in order to improve our practice' (Guiding from school to work, Work programme, Workpackage 1).

The report begins by looking briefly at how the labour market has changed in contemporary Europe and the tensions between contemporary employment and young people's expectations of work.

It continues by focusing on the terminology relating to guidance and attempts a consensual definition for the purposes of this project. It then narrows down the target group as it is understood by the project partners, following on to examine the aspects of exclusion with which young people in Europe are confronted, and then specifically to their difficulties of access to the labour market.

In the next sections, the guidance systems and institutions of the partner countries are summarised, as well as the profiles of guidance professionals. From the information of the project partners, typologies of guidance organisations and guidance professionals are constructed. The report concludes with a schematic outline of guidance skills required for the development of training curricula.

In each section, key questions are derived which focus on issues to be debated by the partners and taken into account when considering the basic requirements to any guidance training offer and deciding on the focus for the selection of examples of best practice for the purposes of the second workpackage in this project.

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<sup>1</sup> References are to the partner reports (DE, EN, FI, FR, NL, PL, TR)

## **2 Research methodology**

The report was compiled according to an iterative process of qualitative social research. Prior to the project's first workshop in Berlin, the partners were sent a draft questionnaire for compilation of the information for this report. The partners presented verbal and written reports at the workshop, and the terms of reference for the analysis in this workpackage was validated by the group. The report was then compiled on the basis of a qualitative questionnaire which was completed by all partners. The partners drew on their own expert knowledge for the answers to the questionnaire, in most cases validating their responses through expert interviews or group discussions. The draft synthesis report was then presented at the second project workshop in Tekirdag. At this workshop, interactive methods were used to validate and enhance the report conclusions. In particular, the specific elements of quality requirements were compiled participatively using the metaplan method, the results subsequently being rated in an electronic survey.

It should be stressed that the statements in this report have clear limits of validity. The survey in this workpackage has the primary purpose of delineating the boundaries of "guidance" for our partners and establishing a consensus on the areas to be covered in future workpackages. The survey does not claim to be representative in a strict social science sense of guidance in Europe, nor necessarily representative of guidance in the individual countries included in our project. The partners have provided qualitative assessments of guidance in their own specific contexts and their judgements are necessarily coloured by the regions and cities in which they work and on the focus of their own activities. For the sake of brevity, we have not qualified every statement, we write of "Germany" or "France" when we should be much more careful about the generalisability of the messages in the report. Nonetheless, we are confident that our method has generated valid knowledge which will be utilisable not only internally in our partnership but which will also be of use for disseminating information about guidance systems and guidance practice in Europe.

This report has attempted to make a synthesis of the expert knowledge of the project partners as communicated in the survey. From the research findings, the report has identified key questions from which to develop the basic requirements to any guidance training offer and, derived therefrom, to determine the focus for the selection of examples of best practice for the subsequent project work. Sincere thanks to all the project partners for the detailed information provided in the survey phase and in the interactive analysis phase of this investigation.

## **3 The changing nature of work and young people's expectations**

In European society, there coexist two perceptions of what employment is. They illustrate the tensions between ideologies of civil rights and social security, and those of free enterprise and flexibility, and are mirrored in the protests of young people in France attempting to retain employee protection and resist flexibilisation.

## **Civil rights and employee security**

On the one hand, there is a 'traditional' idea that people have a 'right' to work which is adequately rewarding not just in the financial sense:

'Work serves society and its citizens, and guarantees well-being. All young people should have the right to work' (FI).

'The job is the kind of human activity enabling independent life and providing people with their needs. Suitable employment, security of employment, level of salary adequate for the post performed, possibility of intellectual development, systems generating motivation - material and immaterial' (PL).

'There is an expectation that work should be not only instrumental (a stable source of income) but also expressive (an opportunity for personal development)' (DE).

'A salary, an interesting / attractive job, a good social atmosphere, responsibilities, nice colleagues' (NL).

The French report refers to the ILO definition, with a normative definition that employment should have sufficient salary level, part or full time, providing security and welfare protection. How realistic are such expectations, given the changes in the nature of employment in contemporary Europe.

## **Free enterprise and employer flexibility**

For, on the other hand, there is a 'new' paradigm of work as highly competitive and insecure: As one report expresses it: 'Without any doubt, the job which the young people approach, when they face the labour market, is characterized by low salaries, uncertainty, and fixed-time contracts. In Italy, there is a lack of protection measures to help young people entering the labour market (IT). In England, National Minimum Wage legislation does not apply to people who are under 18, or apprentices who are over 18 but under 26 in the first 12 months of their apprenticeships (EN).

However, these general trends should not be presented solely in negative terms. The deregulation of employment protection for young people can be seen either as a necessary tool to fight youth unemployment, but on the other hand it may discourage low qualified young people from entering the labour market (EN). The flexibilisation of working practices in the emerging paradigm of work also has challenging and motivating aspects, and opens up opportunities for higher intrinsic motivation among employees:

'Working life expects high quality know-how from young workers, but also increasingly, social abilities and teamwork skills. Young workers have to prove their proficiency in a society of short-term contracts, and to fill the expectations set for them by being efficient and innovative. Work does not have clear limits, duties can expand, they are not predetermined' (FI).

The Turkish report puts the negative consequences starkly: 'There are many young people searching for a job and the employers take this opportunity to employ them for low wages, sometimes with no health insurance. Employers know that people are in need of a job and if one doesn't want to work under these poor circumstances, someone else will' (TR).

## **4 Guidance, counselling, orientation**

First, there is a range of different terms used in this field, from which we need to focus on the ones which are most relevant for our work. And secondly, we need to be sure that we are clear amongst ourselves about our usage of these terms.

In the broadest sense, advice and support activities are to help young people in their vocational development and in planning their professional careers. Guidance covers educational activities of schools, parents and institutions which aim is to prepare young people for making decisions concerning their education, profession and future professional career (TR).

The terms guidance and counselling are relatively stable, the concept of orientation is less familiar (except in French, where it is a key concept corresponding to guidance and counselling). The Italian partners have expressed this in a way which can be taken as consensual to our partnership and is used as the basis for the following discussion.

### **Guidance**

Guidance supports the individual learning process, development of abilities, and consciousness in choice. It is provided to individuals, where necessary over a longer period of time, and addresses both affective and cognitive matters. Similar terms are: coaching, work orientation, tutoring, mentoring, study guidance, service guidance, careers counselling, and consulting, but these are not stabilised. 'The... term ... guidance ... has connotations of leading, directing, coaching, and advising the students at problematic times' (TR).

While the term 'coaching' has not stabilized in all national professional discussions, and although it may be used as a synonym for 'guidance', nonetheless the Netherlands report provides a comprehensive guideline of their understanding of coaching, which corresponds well with the understanding of 'guidance' in the way it is used in the present report:

'Coaching is used with unemployed young people to teach them the competencies which they need to find and keep a job. They can be coached in four areas, which we define as:

- employment mediation through the implementing organisations of social security
- school and careers choice
- social skills
- personal and social-legal problems.' (NL)

### **Counselling**

Counselling is a form of advice to solve existential problems or relationship difficulties. (In Finland, counselling is understood as a more superficial and general support.) This tends towards psychotherapeutic intervention for personal development.

## Orientation

Orientation is less individually focused, informs about the labour market in order to increase career problem solving opportunities. It is more likely to be a short term, or even a single interaction, or even a service provided to groups such as school classes. It is a process of becoming familiar or acquainted with working life, e.g. through work placements. The emphasis is on communication of information and on its cognitive reception.

Guidance elements: profiles in the participating countries	de	en	fi	fr	it	nl	pl	tr
educational options	♦♦	♦	♦♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
labour market options	♦		♦♦	♦	♦♦	♦♦	♦♦	♦
psychological problems					♦	♦♦		♦♦
socio-economic problems					♦	♦♦		♦
individual accompaniment over time	♦♦♦	♦	♦	♦♦		♦	♦♦	
immediate answers (help-desk)	♦			♦♦	♦♦		♦	♦
collective service to groups		♦	♦	♦				
source: partner ratings								

## Key questions

Does our project focus on GUIDANCE as defined above, with a specific emphasis on labour market integration and including both counselling and orientation elements?

To what extent is guidance a specific labour market advice service, and to what extent does it take into account the specific psychological and social conditions of the client and provide psycho-social counselling, tending towards the psychotherapeutic?

To what extent is guidance oriented towards the specific needs of individuals, providing tailor-made coaching and accompaniment over the necessary time until the individual can walk on alone, and to what extent is it an information help-desk providing immediate answers to specific questions, or a collective service providing seminars and work experience – that is to say orientation services without individual counselling?

Do we need a separate term 'coaching' with a discrete signification?

## 5 Young people

For the purposes of our project it is important to come to an understanding of the stage in young people's personal development on which guidance focuses. There is no clear consensus on this since the critical ages vary according to the European nation concerned.

Young people are commonly determined to be between 12 and 25 (or even, according to some, from 10 to 30 – a very large span). Young people are 'older', so to speak, in France and Germany and Poland (they are from 15 years old) and 'younger' particularly in England

and Finland (from 12 years old). The period of youth is perceived as short in England and Italy – in those countries people are there only perceived young until the age of 18 to 20, whereas in the other nations people are seen as young until the age of around 25, or even until 30 in the case of France and Poland. Of course, these are only rough measures which reflect the personal judgements and attitudes and professional focuses of our respondents.

Table : When does a person begin and cease being a young person, what age is critical?

	minimum age	critical age	maximum age
DE	15	20	25
EN	12	16-19	20
FI	12	15-16, 16-19	25
FR	16	22-26	30
IT	13	16	18
NL	13	-	23
PL	15	-	30
TR	14	14 +	25

The critical ages, according to our correspondents, show clear variations according to the conditions in the countries concerned. Turkey’s critical age of 'from 14' reflects early completion of schooling, in comparison to other countries. In England, Finland and Italy the critical age is associated with school leaving ages (from 15 to 19), while in France and Germany the critical age is perceived as having a 'time-lag' (some years later than the school leaving age, from 20 to 26), reflecting concern with the delayed, later effects of unsuccessful transition from education to employment. As the French report points out; the ages between 25 and 30 can be considered critical since these young adults might have already been unemployed for over ten years. The German report makes a similar point, arguing that the cut-off point of 25 is determined by the age limits of youth protection legislation and young people over 25, because they no longer fall under this protection, may be particularly endangered.

Table : Critical stages

before minimum school leaving age	non-critical period
at minimum school leaving age	critical transition period
during vocational training	individually critical period
post-school chronic casual unskilled employment	critical period of indeterminate length
at higher voluntary school leaving age	critical period for those with better qualifications
at end of vocational training	critical period of transition to normal employment
post-vocational training chronic perforated employment history	critical period of indeterminate length

However, many respondents point out that there is no single critical age but rather a series of critical stages at the transition between school and vocational training, and vocational training and work, which are each variable according to the legal minimum and customary maximum school leaving ages, as well as the period of vocational training, which itself can vary. The focus is different according to the country, along the following spectrum:

### Key questions

It will be an issue in the workshop for each partner to focus on the kind of profiles of young people which correspond to their guidance focus. Where are the partners located in this spectrum? In which area do they wish to concentrate?

Critical stages in the participating countries	de	en	fi	fr	it	nl	pl	tr
before minimum school leaving age		♦						
at minimum school leaving age	♦♦	♦	♦♦	♦♦	♦♦	♦♦	♦♦	♦♦
during vocational training	♦	♦	♦				♦	♦
post-school chronic casual unskilled employment	♦♦			♦♦♦	♦	♦♦♦	♦♦	
at higher voluntary school leaving age		♦		♦♦	♦♦			♦
at end of vocational training	♦	♦	♦♦		♦	♦♦	♦	♦
post-vocational training perforated employment	♦							
source: partner ratings								

## 6 Young people and social exclusion

The Polish report states: 'Young disadvantaged people these are young people who are likely to be excluded from society due to lack of education, social background, residence or poverty' (PL). It also reminds us of disability as disadvantage. The Turkish report puts it succinctly: 'social class, region and gender are the apparent characteristics of disadvantaged young people' (TR).

Overall, there is a problem of Inherited social exclusion from working life through generations, for instance, with parents' unemployment as a model. The disadvantaged are often young people from low-income families who themselves have low educational achievement levels (DE). Family problems such as poverty, broken family, parents' weak history in education and work, drug and mental health problems, usually reflect also on the coping of young people (FI).

The statements of the partners correspond in many respects with one another, stressing the linkage between exclusion and poverty in the senses both of material poverty in the sense of low income and reliance on transfer payments, and cultural poverty in the sense of limited cultural and social capital. Within this context, the following key issues can be identified.

## Locality

Those living in declining urban or rural communities, affected by uneven regional economic development are affected by disadvantage. Rural areas in Poland or Turkey or Eastern Germany are mentioned by the partners as areas with few opportunities for young people. In some areas of eastern Germany, virtually all youth is disadvantaged because the lack of employment means that the only realistic option for young people is out-migration to another region (DE).

But it is not just at the level of the region or the difference between urban and rural areas in which disadvantage arises. Those living in declining neighbourhoods in otherwise prosperous cities or regions experience disadvantage in close proximity to visible prosperity, such as in Berlin or the Parisian region: '...the place where young people actually live! The location of their home - for instance suburban poor and excluded neighbourhoods with bad reputation - being possibly a huge factor of discrimination for entering the labour market... We have then observed, in one previous research, some Mayors who decided to give young people from ethnic minorities a mail address at 'Place de la Mairie' in order for them to have better chances to get a job' (FR).

## Gender

Gender is considered an issue specifically by the French and Turkish reports. The latter draws attention to high female illiteracy rates. The French report states that 'Young women are much more and massively disadvantaged than men for the prime access to the labour market' (FR), though going on to qualify this by adding 'But whenever we regard more qualitative statistical data, we can find very interesting differences in this main trend, especially if one pays attention to the type of the first job found regarding to the level of education' (FR). With the specific exception of the Turkish example, gender does not seem to determine disadvantage in a clear way, because women's participation rates in the labour market are no longer substantially lower than those of men. In the UK and the Netherlands, for example, the unemployment rate among young men is appreciably higher than that of young women (NL). However, at the same time there remains clear discrimination in the quality and pay of the jobs held by women, and is apparent in the remuneration levels and the representation in senior and professional positions overall in Europe. Indeed, in the British case girls of Indian origin are show the highest educational achievement in comparison with all other ethnic groups (EN), and in Finland also the educational level of young women is high (FI). Gender certainly becomes a key factor in disadvantage when combined with other factors, such as in the case of single parents (mentioned in EN FR NL), or girls from minorities with particularly gender discriminatory cultures (FI, DE).

## Minority status

Many ethnic minority young people are perceived as particularly disadvantaged in many of the partner countries. Only two partners (PL, TR) do not draw attention to immigration with respect to disadvantage (being countries without the same experiences of in-migration as

the other partners). The Dutch report sets out how young people from specific migrant communities (Antilles, Surinam, Morocco and Turkey) have the least chance on the labour market, without a starting qualification and remaining unemployed for longer than other young people. The problem of youth unemployment and lack of starting qualifications in this way enters the domain of immigration and integration.

The French report gives an idea of the many aspects of disadvantage faced by young people of migrant background: 'Ethnic origin ... is of course a very important factor. But having said that doesn't describe the whole range of the French problem about ethnicity, which doesn't only refers to the culture of origin: If the colour of the skin is obviously an important but troublesome factor ... ;(not) holding French nationality is also one (since it is the first and main condition to get a job as a civil servant...); the number of years spend in France since birth is also one, regarding the young people's capacities of adaptation to the French labour market and / or to the system of allowances for unemployment; ...the name and surname, when sounding 'Arabian', 'African' or foreign from poor southern countries is also a factor of discrimination towards young people entering the labour market... (FR). At the same time, the British report makes clear the differences among different ethnic minorities, with very marked differences in educational achievement between those of Indian and of Pakistani/Bangladeshi origin – the former outperforming the average and the latter at the other end of the scale. Table 3 shows the diversity very clearly:

Table 3 : Percentage of boys and girls aged 16 who achieved 5 or more GCSEs (1999):

Indian girls	White girls	Indian boys	Black girls	White boys	Other group girls	Other group boys	Pakistani / Bangladeshi girls	Black girls	Pakistani / Bangladeshi boys
66	55	54	45	45	44	40	37	31	22

### Individual pathology

Finally, the factors are not solely in the social environment of young people but in the way they inappropriately react to social pressures upon them. The social determinants of disadvantage become compounded by behaviour and attitudes of young people themselves:

- Lack of social skills.
- Lack of objectives and views, inability to see options and possibilities.
- Learning problems, weak skills in learning to learn, lack of concentration, lack of planning.
- Aggressive behaviour, weak tolerance of conflicts and problems.
- Retiring, overactive adolescents and compulsive achievers (FI).

Guidance agencies for mainstream youth in the participating countries	de	en	fi	fr	it	nl	pl	tr
schooling and vocational training system		♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
youth social work								
labour market integration projects		♦		♦♦	♦			
adult education services,	♦		♦	♦	♦			
employment mediation agencies	♦♦		♦	♦	♦	♦♦		♦♦
inter-institutional co-operation				♦	♦		♦	
interim employment agencies				♦				♦
source: partner ratings								

Guidance agencies for excluded youth in the participating countries	de	en	fi	fr	it	nl	pl	tr
schooling/vocational training system	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦	♦	♦
youth social work	♦♦	♦	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦
labour market integration projects	♦♦	♦	♦	♦♦	♦	♦♦		
adult education services								
employment mediation agencies	♦	♦	♦	♦		♦		
inter-institutional co-operation	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦♦
interim employment agencies				♦				
source: partner ratings								

## Key questions

Targeting versus universality: It is an open question whether guidance, in our understanding, is directly at all young people or at disadvantaged youth. Or, to put the question more accurately, whether the same kinds of guidance are suitable for mainstream and disadvantaged youth, and whether the same institutions and the same professionals should be responsible both for mainstream and disadvantaged young people.

This issue is posed directly in the English debate: Arguments in favour of holistic services stress the importance of understanding young people 'not only through the employment lens but through a comprehensive perspective on their day to day life, aspirations and problems' (EN). Against this are the arguments that the clear labour market focus is lost by including broader perspectives into guidance services. 'There is tension between the universal and targeted policies: work on the population at risk can be undermined by the universal perspective of the service provided. There is dilemma between a guidance service targeted on young people at risk, and a wider service for all young people who wish to use it. A reversed criticism considers that by focusing on social excluded first, pupils who have better results do not get enough counselling and guidance about their future choices' (EN).

## 7 Young people's access to the labour market

### The lack of relevance of schooling

Most partners are agreed that the connections between schooling and working life are weak (FI), with the curriculum in most countries being 'theory-oriented' (FI) or 'heavily content-based' (TR). The French report points to the 'unsuitability of the school system

(national education system, very selective and exclusive, based upon competition and with irremovable nationwide curricula and programmes) to the reality of the labour market' (FR). Young people have few opportunities to become familiar with careers by observing, practicing and experiencing them (TR). These assessments of the partners apply to basic education, not necessarily to vocational education, where in some partner countries (for example FI) the link between education and working life is quite good. But in basic education in general, schools and teachers are insufficiently concerned with the requirements, opportunities and problems of the world of work. Schools and teachers have not been entrusted with the task of systematically preparing and accompanying young people along the road of career information, orientation and choice, as well as employment integration. Young people at school do not have enough room in the timetable and they do not have a clear contact person for these matters. The schools specifically do not pay enough attention to the transition from school to vocational training and do not offer any systematic solutions (DE). More generally, there is often a social gap between school and everyday life. For young people school is too theoretical, too abstract, too far away from every day's norms and values (NL). This also means that young people do not have enough practical knowledge about important aspects of working life - labour legislation, employment protection, collective labour agreements (FI).

### **Unrealistic expectations**

This leads young people, in particular excluded young people, to have quite unrealistic expectations of their future careers: for example, unreachable hopes about wages, and about working in artistic fields (FI). As the French report says, if you ask disadvantaged young people about what they would like to do in the future, 'a young males will answer that he wants to become a football champ and a female will answer that she wants to be a movie or show business star' (FR)

### **Competitiveness and complexity in the labour market**

At the same time, the economy is changing rapidly and there is a loss of transparency in the labour market. The demand for vocational qualifications is undergoing rapid and almost inflationary change, vocational profiles and training qualifications are subject to expansion and rapid differentiation, and informal routes into education and employment are declining or becoming more difficult, owing to the growing demand for accreditation and certification. (DE). This leads to an inflation and devaluation of educational and training qualifications (FI, DE). Because of rapid change and increase in complexity, informal counselling through families and peer groups no longer functions effectively, since in a context of rapid change in and increasing complexity of the labour market, parents now need to do research to be able to counsel and can no longer draw on their own experience.

### **Participation in informal economy**

The reverse side of this trend is participation in the informal economy. 'Many young people work in sectors including agriculture, construction, piecework at home, the textile industry and street work as their main source of livelihood, with long hours, low wages, and no

social security or trade union protection (TR). Even in a regulated labour market such as in Finland, a substantial minority (20%) of young people has been offered moonlighting jobs (FI). While participation in the informal economy on the face of it gives young people contact with and experience of the labour market in the short term, it nonetheless cuts them off from mainstream training and career development in the longer term.

### **The social distance between employers and young people**

The partners report on the social distance between employers and young people, and the lack of contact between education/guidance and private enterprise. There is little cooperation between schools and employers. Employers plan their personnel needs only in the short-term, and therefore have little motivation for working with schools (DE). There are on both sides few expectations of long-lasting relationships between employer and young employee. There is also a remoteness between supply and demand: Young people often do not present themselves in the ways expected by employers, neither do employers try to create opportunities which build on the existing capabilities of young people and are attractive to them (EN). There is a corporate reluctance to consider young people as young 'real' professionals (FR). In particular, many employers are not prepared to take the risk of employing disadvantaged young people (EN).

### **Inadequate information**

The German and French reports refer in particular to the problems in access to information – both for young people and for guidance professionals. In Germany, information on education and training is not easily inaccessible and is badly presented and communicated. There is no clear overview of the responsible agencies and the relevant contact persons. The available information is not presented in a pedagogical manner and is not organised systematically and intelligibly. There is inadequate recognition of the specific needs of the different age groups and target groups among young people in the didactic preparation of information. There is even a lack of transparency for counselling professionals, since there is insufficient information literacy among pedagogical and counselling staff: this includes inadequate overview of information sources and media, and contacts between the school, employment counselling and youth protection systems are inadequate, because their professional cultures are very distinct (DE). In France, there is lack of information about the determination of future courses of studies or work at the end of the compulsory secondary school, and difficulties to get accurate and up to date information about jobs and trades, training and higher education. There is a lack of course and career advisers and a lack of competences of the available course and career advisers in the high schools (FR).

### **Difficulties in making choices**

This leads to difficulties for young people in making choices, as reported by several partners. Young people in France in most cases take up a training not chosen by themselves (FR). It is not easy for young people to make decisions about career choice at the age of 15 to 17, and many young people choose further education 'because they cannot see or are afraid of seeing other options' (FI). 'Growing to a profession identity is

considered to be a process, which takes several years. So we are confronted with the problem that a lot of young people make wrong choices' (NL).

### **Key questions**

How can the schooling system be brought closer to the labour market and made more relevant to the world of work? How can we help young people not to have unrealistic expectations of their future employment? How can they adapt to new competitiveness and complexity in the labour market? How can we convince them not to take the short term benefit of the informal economy? How can we bridge the social gap between employers and young people? How can young people become more proficient at making career choices?

## **8 Guidance systems and institutions**

It is a characteristic of guidance systems that they are embedded in a number of state and NGO institutions, in organisations concerned with youth, with education, with employment or social inclusion.

In Germany, the school system makes little contribution and there are no qualified employment guidance professionals in the school system. This gives key roles to the Labour Agency and to NGO services for excluded youth (DE).

In England, schools tend to have a career teacher/coordinator and a careers education programme for 13-19 year olds. However, this does not deal individually with pupils and has only limited impact in promoting the inclusion of disadvantaged youth. There is also a national agency 'Connexions' which targets young people at the transition school-work and which has the policy of catering for all young people while providing special support for young people in danger of exclusion (EN).

In Finland, the transition from school to vocational education is not one of the key problematic interfaces, because of the legal obligation of young people to take up training after completion of schooling (with financial sanctions in the form of loss of entitlement to unemployment benefit for drop-outs). However, the guidance system from vocational education to working life is not strong, consisting in general only of guidance to the services of the Employment Office (FI).

In France, a complex network of organisations exists, the key institutions being the job centres of the National Agency for Employment (which does not provide targeted services for young people), counselling services for young people in the PAIO system (who guide young people from 16 to 25 in respect of training and employment matters), integration enterprises and workshops, which provide jobs, work experience and counselling for excluded youth, and a specialist service for people with disabilities (FR).

In Italy, the focus of guidance is in the school system, without an independently organized guidance/counselling system. The Centres for Employment provide a spectrum of assistance measures, but have not special focus on youth, nor on disadvantage. For those

with poor qualifications, the Territorial Permanent Centres offer educational and training services mainly for people without a compulsory education. The aims of these centres are to enhance the basic skills (foreign language, information technology, etc.) of adults and young people. But there are no specific guidance services for young people in the 14/18 age group, nor for disadvantaged persons. Here the system is in a process of reform, with initiatives to encourage the cooperation between actors in schools, in local authorities and in higher education. A new legal statute in 2003 has initiated a National Plan for Guidance, which promises a review of the system (IT).

In Turkey too, services are located in the school system and the employment agency: Vocational guidance services at schools are mainly provided by the school's guidance and psychological counselling service, while the career guidance and information services are offered by the Turkish Employment Agency, which acts as an information source on the labour market rather than a body guiding young people to career decisions (TR).

In Poland, there is a wider spread of organizations active in the system of guidance / counselling: vocational schools, labour mediation offices, social security service offices, youth workers / community development centres (PL).

### Analytic synthesis

Guidance systems are therefore located in a variety of state and NGO institutions, in organisations concerned with youth, with education, with employment or social inclusion.

- Guidance is first of all integrated in the *schooling and vocational training system*, according to the age of school leaving, at different ages and with different objectives
- Guidance is located also within *youth social work targeted at excluded young people* within other measures for promoting social inclusion
- Guidance is also carried out within *labour market integration services* of remedial training and work experience / employment as well as "interim" temporary work agencies,
- Guidance is also offered within the *adult education services*, especially with respect to young people compensating for non-achievement of schooling qualifications
- Finally, and centrally, guidance services are provided by the *employment mediation agencies* within the systems of employment advice and mediation, and unemployment benefit.

These elements generally have specific profiles which only cover aspects of the guidance requirements of young people. There seems to be no system that covers all aspects at all stages of young people's development within one institution. Some institutions have no specific remit for young people, but are responsible for the labour market integration of all age groups of the working population, while others target the social conditions of young people without having labour market integration as a particular mission. Moreover, in many cases there is not a clear strategic balance between targeting excluded young people and providing a mainstream service for all youth.

## **Integrated guidance systems: an example from the Netherlands**

One key message from the partner reports is that available services are scattered over a number of different organisations, resulting on the one hand in lack of transparency for the client (Where do I go? Where do I go next?) and lack of coordination and networking among providers (Who can help this young person best?).

In the Dutch context in recognition of the fragmentation and lack of transparency in the available services, employment mediation and social welfare have innovatively been located together in a single building. The concept is that: services are available in one location, are recognisable to the client, and a 'market-place' for employment exists, where public and private organisations can offer their services to citizens with as great a market reach as possible and with a broad, accessible provision of information.

'Where several different organisations are involved in clients' reintegration, this is termed a chain approach. In a chain several organisations each have their own role and responsibility in leading a client to employment...A chain depends on co-operation. Each organisation is dependant on the others for information, referrals, supervision and facilities. Businesses belong in a chain as well. In an intensive co-operation a "warm" handing over of the client is of crucial importance. This implies that professionals inform each other about clients personally, face-to face, i.e. not digitally or on paper...This demands investments in short lines of communication and in practical and result-oriented work processes' (NL).

### **Key questions**

What kind of inter-organisational structure is suitable in order to increase transparency and improve networking and cooperation? How can such structures be established?

## **9 Guidance professionals**

Generally speaking, there are very few professionals qualified to provide all aspects (employment and psycho-social) of individual guidance to disadvantaged young people along the whole process of accessing the labour market.

In Germany, It is difficult to work in guidance without very specialist knowledge of the legal-administrative systems. Most generalist social workers do not gain this necessary specialist legal knowledge, having a grounding in psycho-social counselling but not adequately in labour market and employment issues. Labour Agency civil servants, on the other hand, have a detailed knowledge of labour market matters but very little competence in psycho-social and developmental skills. In Germany many of the most qualified professionals come from innovative projects outside the mainstream, people who have themselves been involved in the design and implementation of innovative advice, training and employment integration provision for young people and have gained both the generalist and specialist knowledge necessary in the course of their work, and not infrequently have themselves experienced job insecurity and perforated employment

records (DE).

In England, the establishment of the 'Connexions' service in the 1990s was accompanied by the creation of the professional profile of the 'personal adviser' with a much broader role than that of the former career advisor. As a result of the holistic approach on guidance, personal advisers have been drawn from a range of background including the careers services, youth service, social services teachers and youth offending teams as well from the voluntary and community sectors. In the schools, the school guidance service is being improved through the recruitment of non-teachers: most career co-ordinators are teachers but there is a growing number of newly-appointed co-ordinators who are not teachers and whose sole responsibility is career education (EN).

In Finland, people working with youth have three main educational backgrounds: Study advisors, teachers and special needs teachers have a university-level pedagogical teacher education; Psychologists, school psychologists, career choice psychologists, employment office workers and social workers have mainly received a university-level social science education; and school welfare officers generally have a university-level education in social work (FI).

The three main professional groups involved in guidance in France are: 1) counsellors working in schools, with a postgraduate training (3+2 years) in Sociology, Psychology, Economy and Sciences of Education; 2) social workers with 2 or 3 years training, some with further qualification and 3) employment advisors in the public sector with in-service training. Also to be found are professionals with specialist 5 year training in work psychology, and also some with law diploma (FR).

The profiles in Italy are the following: 1) guidance information operator with an orientational role, providing information and training; 2) guidance adviser supporting individual decisions through a reflection on potential personal growth paths compatible with opportunity and resources; 3) guidance policies and services analyst engaged in service planning and organisational networking (rather than counselling at the client interface); 4) teacher offering guidance concerning optional activities and responsible for relations with parents. Qualifications of guidance staff are generally either a degree in humanities followed by experience gained in social or voluntary areas; or an educational and training science degree with specialization in orientation. Psychologists and sociologists usually attend institutional university courses which often do not have a specialization in orientation., but there exists a counselling qualification for a Psychologist who has attained a specific three years degree (IT).

In the Netherlands, the professional and educational backgrounds of professionals vary with the type of work they do: youth workers have an educational background in social work (School of Social Work); professionals working in organizations for labour mediation, reintegration bureaux and organizations for social security have a background in social legal services (School of Law) (NL).

In Poland, guidance professionals have pedagogical or psychological education, namely teachers, school educators, psychologists and counsellors (PL).

Guiding is provided in Turkey by 1) school counselling (“guidance teachers”), 2) guidance and research centres (assessment of students referred children and parents and school counsellors, special education services) and 3) educational units of public and private institutions. Private counselling is used by clients on high incomes, while people with low incomes with psychological problems are often referred to psychiatry units of hospitals. School counselling is directed at supporting school adjustment of students, while the contribution of school counselling services to work life is limited to helping students choose appropriate fields to study and make better decisions. There is no particular service or institution designed to support transition from school to work (TR).

Professional profiles in the participating countries	de	en	fi	fr	it	nl	pl	tr
Teachers / pedagogues	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦	♦	♦
Psychologists	♦	♦	♦	♦♦	♦		♦	♦♦
Social and youth workers	♦♦	♦	♦♦			♦	♦	♦
Law graduates		♦		♦		♦		
Business administration		♦						
Social science / humanities	♦	♦		♦♦	♦		♦	♦
Non-graduates	♦	♦			♦	♦♦	♦	
source: partner ratings								

### Analytic synthesis

It is clear that guidance is distributed among a number of different institutions and the professional culture of guidance professionals is correspondingly varied. Guidance is located in

- the schooling system, where the guidance staff are generally trained teachers, with or without supplementary training
- the employment mediation agencies, generally national organisations in which guidance is provided by civil servants with different backgrounds: either specialist training in labour law relating to the organisation’s specific activities or, especially where special services for excluded young people are provided, social work / psychology training for counselling services
- social service agencies, either provided by NGOs or local/regional government, in which generally a focus is on people affected by social exclusion: either excluded by educational failure or employment precariousness. Here the professionals are generally social workers or psychologists.
- human resources professionals in enterprises, concerned with staff recruitment and retention

None of these institutional and occupational profiles are ideal, since each one offers only a partial service and the involved professionals have only a partial insight into the guidance mission:

- teachers do not usually have knowledge of the labour market, some entering teaching because of a lack of knowledge of the world of work, and a reluctance to leave the education system
- civil servants in the employment mediation authorities, even if their work profile may

- include contacts with enterprises, may never have had personal experience of private enterprise organisations and, even more, have had no personal experience of employment precariousness, having been in secure public sector employment all their lives
- social workers and psychologists may have had very little contact with and experience of the mainstream labour market and may be ideologically hostile to private enterprise
  - human resources professionals in enterprises may have limited understanding of young people's lifestyles and values and no contact with or empathy for social exclusion

There is a need for professionals who understand what the labour market is even for those young people who do not fit easily into some stable job (if such a thing as a 'stable job' exists any more): professionals with an understanding of rapidly changing professional profiles, short half-life of qualifications, perforated, patchwork careers.

### **Key questions**

How can we ensure that the professionals providing guidance services have the required spectrum of competences and in addition have experience of and empathy for the contemporary social and personal condition of young people?

Of the existing professional profiles (teachers in the schooling system, civil servants in the employment mediation authorities, social workers and psychologists in NGOs, human resources professionals in enterprises), which are the profiles on which to focus?

Should we develop 'compensatory' supplementary training for each profile to increase its holistic nature? What form should these supplementary trainings take?

## **10 Guidance skills**

The skills required for guidance of young people from school to work are varied. They depend, of course, on the profiles of young people being targeted, on the organisations in which the professionals work and on the type of mission which is associated with the professionals' work. So the question of skills for professional guidance cannot be answered in a general way, except by giving a maximum list of aspects from which individual skills profiles can be derived. The answer to this question is a central element of Workpackage 1 but cannot be answered for all partners in an identical way. For the purposes of simplification, only the responses from four partners (DE, FI, NL,FR) are set out below. These are representative of the concerns of the partners overall and also correspond quite closely with each other.

The German list of skills is concise and structures the requirements in terms of technical knowledge and socio-pedagogical skills. It also avoids the danger of socio-pedagogical practice as a 'hermetic' skill isolated from the realities of enterprises and employers, by stressing the 'matching/brokering' between labour supply and demand. But it does not mention knowledge of education systems, which seems a gap.

Knowledge relating to:

- Social legislation
- Labour market

Skills relating to:

- Counselling
- Case management
- Matching / brokering (DE)

The Finnish list also sets out knowledge and skills requirements, and differentiates between different socio-pedagogical roles and skills. It also brings in the dimension of the young person's family environment, as well as the issue of interorganisational networking.

- Knowing the working life.
- Knowing the legislation related to education and working life.
- Knowing about labour force services and giving advice on them.
- Professionalism: social and interactional skills with different kinds of adolescents.
- Ability to keep the roles clear: professional and adolescent.
- Acknowledging and taking advantage of the adolescent's resources and skills, avoiding excessive problem-orientation.
- Ability to motivate and future-orientedness.
- Acknowledging the significance of the cooperation between school and home.
- Knowing different cooperational partners and networking with them.
- Multiprofessional cooperation. (FI)

The Dutch case includes in addition the need for guidance professionals to understand the lifestyles of young people, and mentions a new requirement concerned not just with knowledge and skills, but also values.

knowledge :

- labour market,
- law (in the fields of labour, social security, education, tax)
- educational systems.
- lifestyle of young people (and parents)

methods :

- mediation,
- counselling,
- communication,
- case management
- assessment.
- interorganisational networking

values :

- concern and involvement towards young people (NL)

The French example expands the Dutch element of values to and makes it more explicit by formulating the professional role in terms of personal commitment and engagement, as well as individual qualities of perseverance ('capacities to struggle'). What has been formulated by other partners as a requirement for knowledge of labour markets is extended to include sociological understanding of poverty.

- strong commitment to improving quality of life of disadvantaged young people,
- knowledge of labour and integration of young people laws,
- knowledge of the trades, jobs and paid training available on the labour market.
- psychology of teenagers and young adults.
- sociological knowledge about poverty and the structure of the labour market,
- capacities to struggle with the state agencies
- general skills and abilities of social workers (FR)

## Analytic synthesis

Bringing the contributions of the partners together, it is possible to identify a spread of skills requirements including scientific knowledge, applied policy knowledge, pedagogical skills, key skills and finally humanistic values.

*Scientific knowledge* : sociology (e.g. poverty) / social psychology (e.g. youth culture) / macroeconomics (e.g. flexibilisation, globalisation) / business administration (e.g. SME culture)  
*Policy knowledge* : education systems / training systems / employment creation / social welfare / labour law  
*Pedagogical skills* : assessment / case management / counselling / person-centered therapy / communication-rapport / resource-orientation  
*Key skills* : 'knowing working life' / networking  
*Humanistic values* : social justice / political commitment

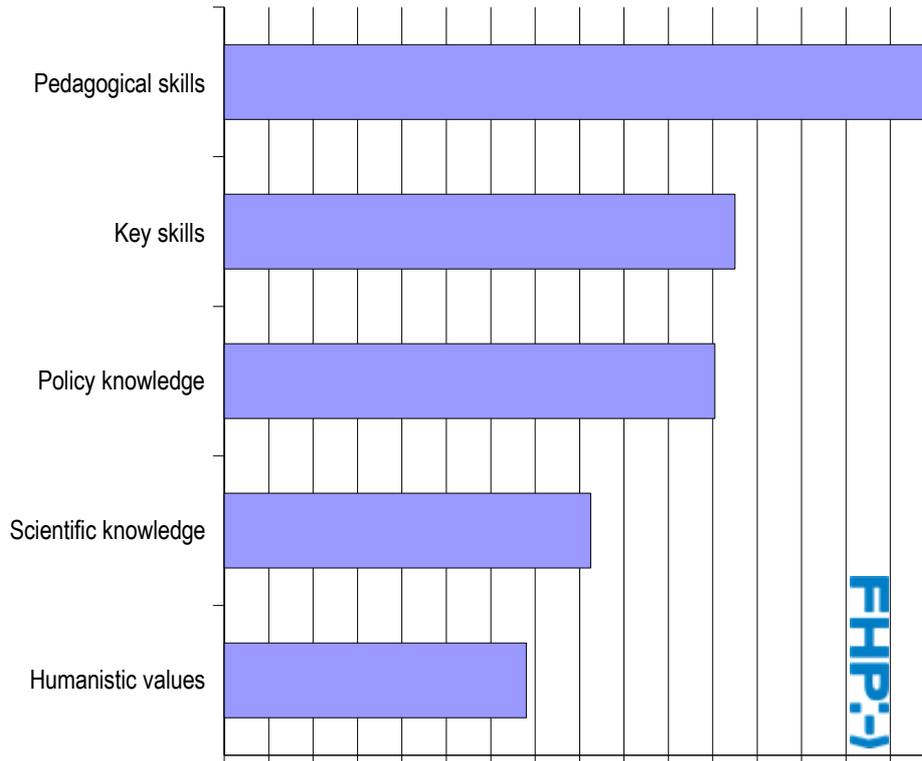
This analytic structure was taken as the basis for a further participatory activity to identify the specific elements to be included within this structure of quality requirements for guidance practice. The partners contributed the key elements from their expert perspective and these were ranked in importance by the partners. It can be seen that the individual partners have clear individual profiles according to skills and knowledge requirements. For example, the French partner lays great emphasis on humanistic values (with the German partners also favouring this area), the English partner puts by far the strongest emphasis on pedagogical skills (as also the German partners do), policy knowledge is prioritised by the Italian partner (but also by Poland and Finland), while regarding key skills there is quite a degree of consensus among the partners (see table 1).

The aggregated rankings of the individual elements within the categories of scientific and policy knowledge, pedagogical and key skills as well as humanistic values, are presented in tables 2 to 6.

## Key questions

The requirements can be set down as a 'maximal' list which could apply in ideal circumstances. But what limitations on this set of skills requirements will we encounter in practice in different national/local/institutional/educational settings? What are the priorities to be focused on?

### Knowledge and skills requirements overview

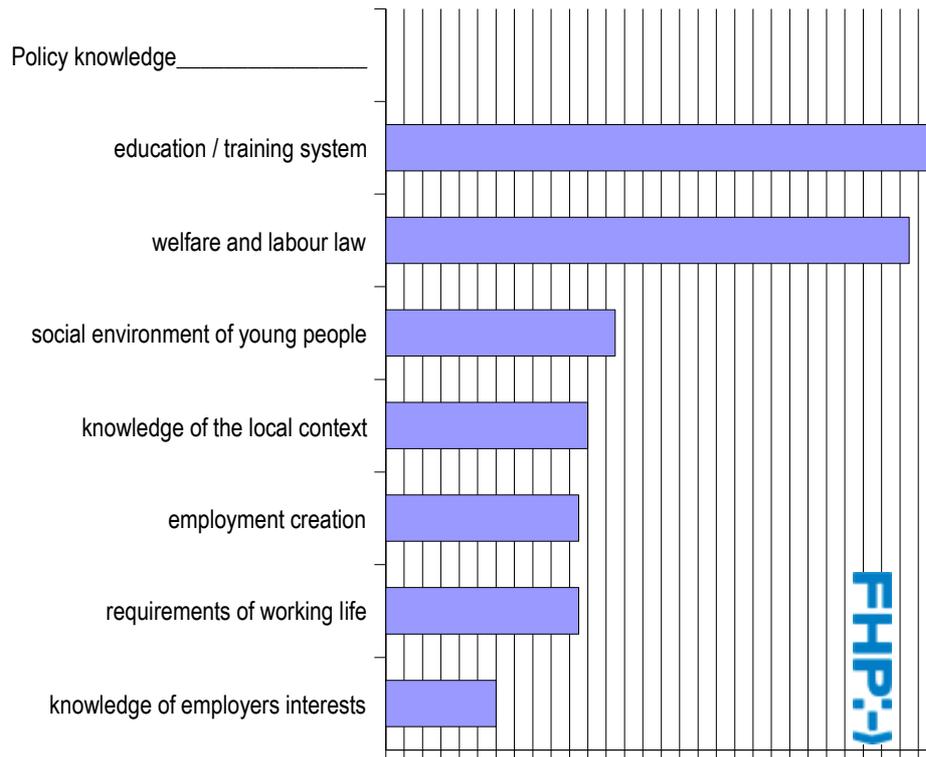


Aggregated and edited responses of the partners to the question 'Please give your priorities for the different elements of the quality requirements'.

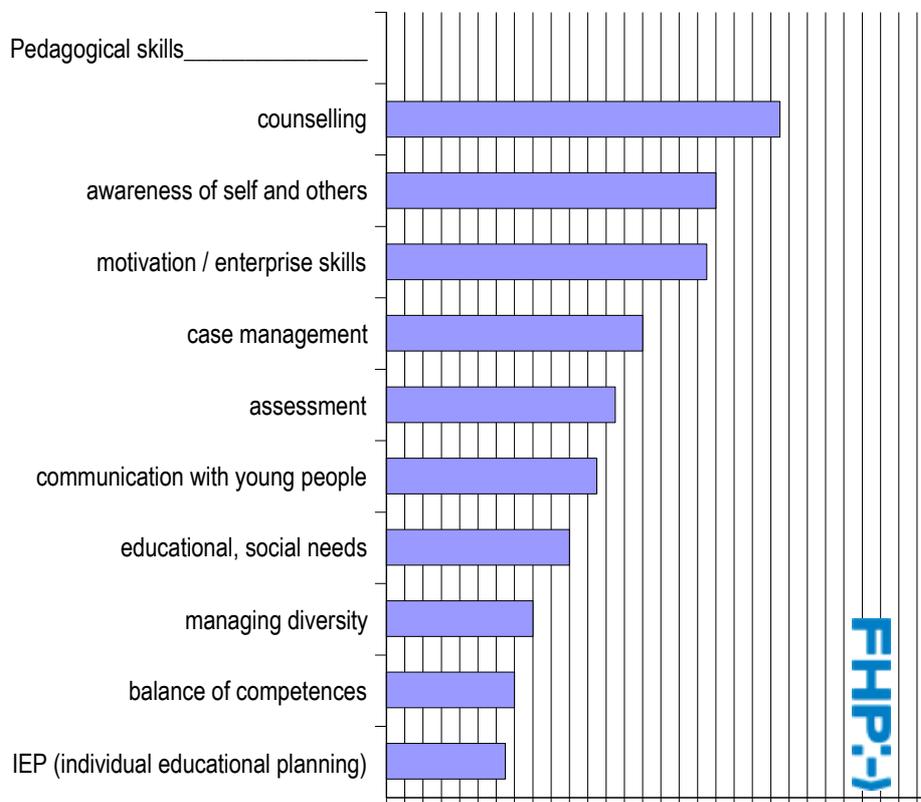
### Scientific knowledge



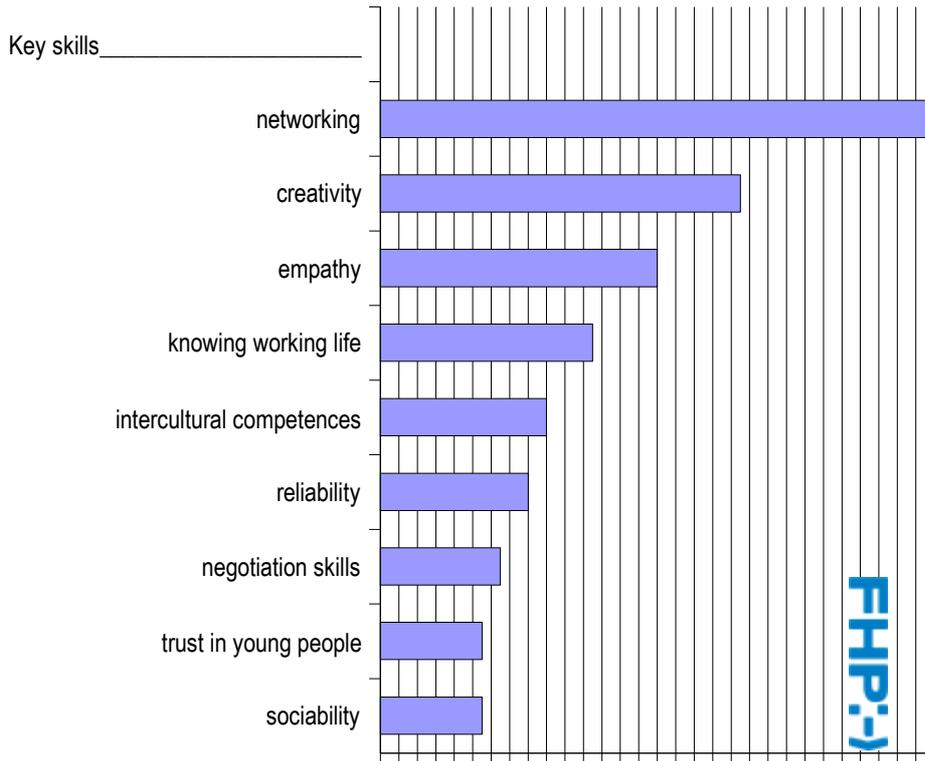
### Policy knowledge



### Pedagogical skills



### Key skills



### Humanistic values

