

National Report on the quality situation in guidance in group settings in BULGARIA

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1 Offer in scope of guidance in group setting measures in Bulgaria

Background

The system of career guidance and activation training measures in Bulgaria is in a period of thorough review and outlining of steps and measures to ensure its effectiveness. Especially about improving its integrity and taking measures for ensuring career guidance through school period.

As the guidance system 10 – 15 years ago used to be focused mainly of young people helping them to find the most appropriate profession, and to direct them to suitable education and vocational training, in Bulgaria there were strong traditions in collecting information about professions, describing job profiles, analysis and information of the development of the job places specification and skills requirement, etc. This analysis used to focus more the vocational orientation depending of the personal skills and potential, and less the motivation and activation process.

In the last years, with the need to overcome the high rate of unemployment, and the demands for re-qualification of large number of people whose professional skills are not applicable to the job situation any more, the Bulgarian career guidance and activation measures faces several challenges:

- ◇ to assure proper analysis on the trends for job places (possible new job places, changes in the profile of the existing job places, etc.)
- ◇ to analyze the personal potential of each person needing new qualification or upgrading of his existing qualification, and to offer him adequate training measures
- ◇ to reintegrate the long-time unemployed back into the labour market, applying motivation and activation measures directed towards all people undergoing new-qualification measures

From this position, the provision of the career guidance, group settings measures and activation measures is undergoing a process of adjustment to the client's needs and to the market needs. Career guidance and counseling services in Bulgaria became popular during the last years and activities and services offered are targeted at different clients. The main providers of such services are the national Employment Agency (EA) through the labour bureaus throughout the country, private counseling centers and agencies, university career centers, pedagogical advisors in secondary and vocational schools. The big organizations and companies in Bulgaria offer to their employee possibilities for career guidance through their human resources development departments. There are professional orientation centers and counselors within different non-governmental organizations who conduct initiatives addressing career guidance.

In general the efforts in the last years are targeted to establishment of one strong and coherent system of career guidance on all level.

Regulations and Terminology

The legislative frame which covered guidance measures from school to after school period in Bulgaria includes Law for Vocational Education and Training, National strategy for continuing vocational training during the period 2005-2010, National Action Plan for Employment 2010, Updated Employment Strategy 2008-2015, Law for Higher education, National program for development of school and preschool education and preparation 2006-2013.

The Law for Vocational education and training as well as the Law for encouragement of the employment provides the legislative basis on provision of guidance services in the field of adult training. According to Law for the vocational education and training: "*The system of the vocational education and training includes vocational orientation, vocational training and vocational education.*"¹ The vocational orientation aims to "*provide the informing, consulting and counseling to students, to other persons regarding the choice of profession and carrier development*"²

Important place has the developed in 2009 road map for Career guidance in Bulgaria 2009-2013 where the term career guidance is used to substitute term vocational orientation and "...guidance refers to a range of activities that enables citizens of any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make 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."³ In this document **are set the main priority for the development of the career guidance for the period of 2009-2013 as follow:**

Priority 1. Elaborating career guidance in sector of education and training through improving competencies of carrier guidance' staff through certified training.

Priority 2. Elaborating career guidance in the sector of employment and social inclusion through improving competencies of carrier guidance' staff through certified training

¹ LAW FOR THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, Art. 4

² LAW FOR THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, Art. 5

³ Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council on Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the field of Guidance throughout life in Europe, May 2004

Priority 3. Ensuring necessary information data base for quality delivering of the career guidance' services through establishment of a national informative data base for career guidance.

Priority 4. Improving the access of all Bulgarian citizens to the career guidance' services through development, maintenance and update of a national internet portal for career information and consultation.

Priority 5. Establishing system for management of the career guidance through establishment of a National agency for career guidance (or Direction "Career guidance" in NAVET).

Types and functions of the institutions regarding the career guidance on a different level:

1) "On national level are:

The **Ministry of Education, Youth and Science** (MEYS) guides, coordinates and controls the accomplishment of the state policy in the field of vocational education and training. The Ministry regulates and methodically guides the continuing vocational training that is being accomplished through a system of vocational schools, vocational secondary schools, art schools, vocational colleges and the higher schools.

The **Ministry of Labour and Social Policy** (MLSP) develops, coordinates and implements the state policy in the field of the professional qualification of the labour force (employed and unemployed persons). The Ministry is responsible for preparation of the annual National Action Plan for Employment, for determination of the needs of vocational training by analysis of the trends in the labour market and for the organization of the professional consultation. The Ministry participates in the updating of the National Classifier of Professions.

The **Employment Agency** under the administration of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy implements the state policy for stimulation of the employment, for the defense of labour market, the professional information and consultation, vocational and motivating training of unemployed and employed persons as well as the intermediate services relating employment.

The **National Agency for Vocational Education and Training** (NAVET) is specialized body of the Council of Ministers, created (1999) by the Vocational Education and Training Act, in order to license activities in the field of the vocational education and training and coordinate the institutions related to the vocational orientation, training and education. The Agency elaborates the State Educational Requirements to the system of the vocational education and training as well as the List of Professions for vocational education and training. The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training regulates the vocational training carried out in the licensed centers for vocational training.

2) On the regional level:

The Directorates "Regional Employment Office", within the complex of activities for encouraging the employment, organize the realization of the state policy for acquisition of vocational qualification, suggest measures and training projects, coordinate and support the activities of the local Employment Offices, including services for vocational consulting and orientation within the region.

The permanent and temporary Employment Commissions at the Regional Councils for Regional Development determine, organize and control the implementation of the state policy for encouraging the employment and the training for acquisition of vocational qualification on a regional level.

The regional administration participates in the implementation of the state policy for employment and acquisition of vocational qualification on a regional level.

3) On the local level:

The Municipalities participate in the policy development in the field of the vocational education and training within their territories regarding the need of specialists and workers; the professional orientation of students, unemployed and other persons; the development of the material-technical bases of schools, Vocational Training Centers and Centers for information and professional orientation through financial means from the Municipality's budget.

The Directorates "Employment Office", within the complex of their inherent mediation activities for finding jobs, provide professional information, consultancy and orientation for submission in the most appropriate programme, employment and training; they organize vocational and motivating training of employed and unemployed persons.

The Councils for Cooperation at the Directorates "Employment Office" of the Employment Agency monitor the implementation of the programmes and measures included in the National Employment Action Plan; control the adherence to the regulations for selection of the respective programmes and measures."⁴

In 2007 the **Bulgarian mission of the National Board for Certified Counselors** (NBCC Bulgaria) was found to support the development of the career consultant profession and the system of professional career counseling in the country through:

- Conducting trainings and certifies career consultants under the Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF);
- Guarantees the abidance of the ethical standards by the certified professionals;
- Support the development of career consultants in Bulgaria.

⁴ NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL TRAINING DURING THE PERIOD 2005-2010, Section I, p. 3

Business Foundation for Education founded by JobTiger Ltd., represents NBCC in Bulgaria and promote GCDF program.

In 2007 was also established an **Association of career consultants**. It works for the development of the capacity of the professional community of career consultants. The Association's most important tasks are recognition and institutionalization of the profession, elaboration of ethical code of the consultants and providing high quality services for all the needy clients.

Anyway, there is a difference in the provision of the guidance measures for students and for adults. In general and vocational education, guidance is provided by pedagogical advisors or school psychologist. In the Universities guidance is a function of the guidance counselors within the career centers in each university. In the labour market sector this role is undertaken by the guidance counselors within the labor offices' information and guidance units.

The measures for activation are main mission of the Employment Agency in Bulgaria, which is *"Established ... with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy for the implementation of the state policy on encouraging of employment, protection of the labour market, professional information and consulting, professional and motivation training of unemployed and employed persons, as well as for carrying out mediation activity for employment"*⁵

According to the Bulgarian regulations, *"The persons who are actively looking for job have the right to use...*

- *professional information, consultation and orientation*
- *professional and motivation training"*⁶

Aslo, in the Bulgarian regulation system the activation group training is defined as:

⁵ LAW OF ENCOURAGEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT, Art. 7

⁶ LAW OF ENCOURAGEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT, Chapter 4 – "Rights And Obligations Of The Persons Look For Job And Of The Employers", Art. 17

„*Motivation training*” is a training for stimulation and directing the individuals to a training for acquiring professional qualification and/or employment through acquiring knowledge and skills for orientation on the labour market, looking for and choice of training or employment.” The term “Motivation Training” is used further in this report as corresponding most adequately to the situation in Bulgaria.

1.1 Initiator(s) of guidance measures

As a main initiator of guidance measures and activation training measures for adults in Bulgaria can be identified the National Employment Agency, according to its regulatory acts: *“The including of the unemployed persons in training for acquiring professional qualification is organised by the Employment Agency and shall be preceded by professional orientation, informing and consulting”*⁷.

These measures are provided as a part of the so called “mediation services”, which include informing and consulting the persons looking for job, psychological assistance, and directing them to professional and/or motivation training.⁸ These measures are free of charge for Bulgarian citizens, and can be organized and provided by:

- “1. the Employment Agency;*
- 2. individuals and/or corporate bodies with more than 50 percent Bulgarian participation, registered according to the Bulgarian legislation”*⁹

The conditions and the order of organising professional orientation, informing and consulting is determined by the regulations for implementation of the Law of Encouragement of Employment.

The main initiator of guidance services for students is Ministry of Education, Youth and Science. According to the road map for Career guidance in Bulgaria

⁷ LAW OF ENCOURAGEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT, Art. 65

⁸ LAW OF ENCOURAGEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT, Art. 26

⁹ LAW OF ENCOURAGEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT, Art. 27

2009-2013 and the Program for development of education, science and youth policies in Bulgaria 2009-2013 there will be an accent for improvement of the guidance services offered to the students in terms of better prepared specialists, better effectiveness of the existing services and accent to the guidance measures in the lower level of education system.

Financing

The main part of financing of the guidance services, both in educational and employment sector is provided by the state budget. Some non-governmental organizations are active in the field, but they are funded through projects.

The sources of financing of the motivation training, which are coming from the government budget, are managed by the Employment Agency:

"The resources for active policy shall be spent for:

... 1. programmes and measures for acquiring of professional qualification, motivation training of unemployed and employed persons"¹⁰

"The training for acquisition of professional qualification for unemployed and employed persons and the motivation training of unemployed persons shall be financed by the territorial divisions of the Agency for employment"¹¹

From the end of 2009 Employment Agency introduced a new system of financing – voucher system, funds for which are coming from Operational Programme "Human Resources Development" 2007-2013. That would be the main financing of the training and qualification. Unemployed and employees can receive vouchers for training and can participate in course for obtaining professional qualification and/or key competence. The vouchers are nominal securities with a fixed nominal value in levs, which give the right to the owner to participate in chosen training.

Provision

¹⁰ LAW OF ENCOURAGEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT, Art. 16

¹¹ ORDINANCE FOR THE CONDITIONS AND THE ORDER FOR FINANCING THE TRAINING FOR ACQUISITION OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION AND MOTIVATION TRAINING, ORGANISED BY THE AGENCY FOR EMPLOYMENT, Art. 2

Through its Labour offices in the country the Employment Agency “organises and finances motivation training of unemployed persons, the selection of the training organisation being implemented under the conditions and by the order of the Law of public procurement.”¹²

Within these procedures, the regional employment bureaus regularly open tenders for provision of motivation training. The motivation training can be:

- ◇ a separate course for motivation training
- ◇ a module for motivation training, as a part of a training for professional qualification.

In both cases, **the motivation training is expected to cover:**

- skills for preparing job applications: writing CVs, motivation letters, filling application forms, answering questionnaires etc.
- skills for effective searching for a job using various information sources for available job places;
- motivation and skills for self-presentation during a job interview, and tracking out every job possibility;
- using the positive group dynamics – increasing the activity in searching for a job, cooperation, support, encouragement

Depending on the type of the course, **the duration** of the motivation training varies from 30 hours when is provided as a module from a professional training course, to about 120 hours when is provided as a separate training.

Universities provide opportunities for career guidance through their career centers. The career centers do not work with external clients except for the candidate students. In some cases students’ organizations also makes some initiatives for career guidance.

¹² REGULATION FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW FOR ENCOURAGEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT, Art. 70

The schools offers professional guidance to their students through the pedagogical advisors assigned in schools though still this is not a well functioning system. The activities provided by the pedagogical advisors at schools are the following: review of the abilities, interests, setting realistic educational and professional goals etc. and also providing information for educational possibilities in the region, cooperation with parents, authorities etc.

1.2 Organisations carrying out the training measures

The training measures in Bulgaria are carried out by several types of institutions:

- ◇ **Training institutions that are providing training for adults.** Usually these are training institutions, which apply for the tenders for motivation training open by the employment bureaus. Most of them are **“Centers for Vocational Training”** - private companies or NGOs, licensed by the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training for provision and certification of professional training. But when the motivation training is offered as a separate course, there are no limitations for any kind of institutions that can prove the appropriate capacity to provide the training, to participate in the tender and be contracted for the course.
- ◇ Apart from the Employment Bureaus courses, some vocational orientation and activation measures are carried out by the **private institutions for recruitment of personnel**, registered after the regulations of the “Ordinance for the Conditions and the Order of Carrying out Employment Intercession”, who are acting as mediators between people looking for a job, and employers. These institutions *“provide, in groups or individually, intercession services for:*
 - *informing and consulting the persons looking for a job and the employers;*
 - *psychological assistance to the persons looking for a job;*

- *direction to vocational and/or motivation education”¹³*
- ◇ Some vocational orientation measures are also carried out by the **Employment Bureaus themselves**, in the form of interviews with the unemployed people and matching their existing qualifications with the available job places. For this measure, career consultants are employed in all the Employment bureaus, and in some of them are opened “Job Centers” providing more detailed information.

It has to be pointed that the last two types of institutions provide not course-based training, but individual consultations/interviews to direct the people to the possible jobs, without doing any actual training.

- ◇ Specific role in the Bulgarian regulations is assigned to the **Centres for information and professional orientation**, which can be established as separate institutions in the system of the vocational education and training, according Act 18 p.6 of the Law for Vocational Education and Training:

The Centres for information and professional orientation shall carry out professional orientation of students and other persons, and:

“ (1) ... can be state, municipal or private, Bulgarian with foreign participation, and foreign.

(2) The state and municipal centers are corporate bodies with issued license for carrying out vocational training or professional orientation.

(3) The private centers are sole entrepreneurs or corporate bodies established as trade companies, co-operatives, associations and foundations with issued license for carrying out vocational training or professional orientation.

¹³ ORDINANCE FOR THE CONDITIONS AND THE ORDER OF CARRYING OUT EMPLOYMENT INTERCESSION, Art. 2

(4) The Bulgarian centers for vocational training and centers for information and professional orientation with foreign participation are registered in the Republic of Bulgaria associations between Bulgarian and foreign individuals and/or corporate bodies with issued license for vocational training or professional orientation.

(5) The foreign centers for vocational training and centers for information and professional orientation are foreign corporate bodies carrying out their activity in the Republic of Bulgaria in compliance with international agreements and which have obtained license for vocational training or for professional orientation.

(6) The ... centers for information and professional orientation cannot be managed or represented by persons who are convicted with vested verdict ..."

(7) The license for vocational training or for professional orientation shall be issued by the National Agency for vocational education and training."

(8) Untill January 31 of each calendar year ... centers for information and professional orientation are obliged to present in National Agency for vocational education and training information for accomplished activities during the past calendar year."

(9) National Agency for vocational education and training defined indicators for the presented annual information Untill January 31 of each calendar year ... centers for information and professional orientation are obliged to present in NAVET information for accomplished activities during the past calendar year."¹⁴

At this stage, there is a clear procedure for licensing of such type of institutions, and there are 2 licenses that are officially issued, but it can be mentioned that this type of vocational orientation providers have still little influence on the Bulgarian labour market situation.

¹⁴ LAW FOR THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, Art. 20 – 21 - 22

Professional orientation services for students are provided by the **University career centers**. Network of 36 university career centers in all the big universities in the country has been established since 2005 as a result of the initiatives of Labor Market Project USAID, Business Foundation for Education and JobTiger. The services are mainly the following: providing information for vacancies and internship programs, labor market (employers, salaries, workplaces' requirements, candidates' expectations, profession development tendencies, etc.).

1.3 Setting in which guidance measures are carried out in Bulgaria (either in single coaching, group coaching, group training etc.)

Usually the guidance measures are carried out within the premises of the providing institutions, without having any special recommendations to the size or equipment:

- ◇ Usually in the Employment Bureaus there are some separate rooms for consultations and interviews; those of them who have "Job Centers" usually have also a library with information materials and video/DVD players. Employment Bureaus provide the following guidance services:
 - Vocational guidance – individual or group sessions. The aim is to provide support in choosing an occupation; acquiring a qualification level. The consultations are implemented through the provision of advice and information on the current requirements and possibilities on the labor market, occupational requirements and client demands.
 - Vocational information – individual or group sessions, aimed at providing information concerning the different professions, required skills for implementing them, employment trends both at National and International level, the required personal skills, training possibilities, studying, increasing the level of qualification; educational and training institutions; the forms of study, requirements on reception, provided certification on graduation; possible professional realization on the labor market.

- ◇ The training institutions that provide the motivation training usually use premises similar to those for theoretical courses in the professional training, and they are usually equipped with flipchart or boards for writing, and some audio and video equipment. But it highly depends on the institution; there is no standard for the working place for motivation training, the only requirement in the tender procedures is that “the workspace has to assure the achievement of the training goals”.
- ◇ when the vocational orientation is provided by the intercession companies, they have to: “... *provide the necessary material and technical base for the employment intercession activity; the material and technical base shall include appropriate premises for the services, office equipment, computers and computer equipment, telephone and fax machine.*”¹⁵
- ◇ University career centers provide different free services for students and young specialists (graduates and alumni). Career centers offer group and individual trainings development of employability skills – intrapersonal competencies, career planning, looking and applying for a job, etc. In recent years more applicable are group trainings where are used different techniques for assessing aptitude, motivation etc. Relatively rare are continuous individual counseling.

1.4 Requested initial and further training of guidance staff in Bulgaria

The specialists from the career counseling and development sphere in Bulgaria are university graduates with mainly humanitarian profile (psychology, pedagogic, social activities) although it is not a formal obligation. There is a large number of career counselors graduated specialties as economics, labor organization, human resources management, management, etc.

¹⁵ ORDINANCE FOR THE CONDITIONS AND THE ORDER OF CARRYING OUT EMPLOYMENT INTERCESSION, Art. 21

During the past years profession “Career consultant” was listed in the National Classification of Professions and several master programs and post-graduate qualification program was developed.

No definite requirements are officially specified for the trainers in Bulgaria. In the “Methodology for Evaluation of the Proposals for Professional Training and Motivation Training Courses Organized and Financed by the Employment Agency”¹⁶ the evaluation grid points that the maximum number of points is given to proposals where:

- ◇ The qualification of the trainers correspond to the thematic of the course
- ◇ All the trainers have a University degree
- ◇ All the trainers have at least 600 teaching hours practice in the indicated training area
- ◇ All the trainers have at least 600 teaching hours practice in adult education

But as these statements have to be regarded more as evaluation criteria than as requested qualification, it is up to the training institutions to form their training teams.

In practice, the greatest numbers of trainers in motivation are psychologists, or have a degree in pedagogy, sociology or social studies. In Bulgaria are very rare the cases where teachers in professional education or general education teachers are re-qualified as motivation trainers.

¹⁶ An official document, signed by the Minister of the Labour and Social Policy

The possibilities for specific further training for motivation trainers offered by the Bulgarian Universities and institutions for continuous education are limited. This is due also to the fact that the Bulgarian Universities regard the “career guidance” as a part of the pedagogy and not as a separate thematic area, and for the students the “vocational orientation” is offered as a part of the general curriculum. However there are specialized **Programs** offer trainings for career counselors:

- ◇ Renewed Master program „Qualification and redirection of work force” and post-graduate qualification program „Professional orientation and career counseling” at Pedagogical Faculty of Sofia University starting in 2008.
- ◇ Master Program “Career guidance and development” at Pedagogical Faculty of Ruse University since 2005.
- ◇ Master Program for career development in the biggest private university – New Bulgarian University.
- ◇ “Career consulting and management of human resources” in University of Veliko Tarnovo – program for additional qualification and pre-qualification for students, bachelors and masters.

The four universities include Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF) program’s methodology as a practical component and provide graduates with the possibility to receive an international certificate together with diploma. GCDF certification was first introduced in Bulgaria in 2006. The program is managed by the Business Foundation for Education (BFE) in Sofia.¹⁷

¹⁷ <http://bulgaria.nbcc.org/qcdf> (GCDF section), date of access: Jan.29, 2010

The program is implemented in 40 countries in the world. The methodology provides competencies in different spheres – theoretical model for career development, assessment, and support for clients, work with clients representing specific cultural and social groups and with special needs, action plan, training of clients, realization of career development programs, ethical standards in counseling. The training is 120 hours and includes practical trainings, self-preparation of exercises and real case with a client.

More than 1000 career specialists are trained under this program, including pedagogical advisors from secondary and vocational schools in the country, career counselors from university career centers and human resources specialists from business organizations, public institutions and non-governmental sector.

The National Pedagogical Center under the Ministry of Education and Science provides trainings of pedagogical advisors from secondary and vocational schools who will offer professional orientations services to pupils. As a result of a joint project with Business Foundations for Education 15 methodologists were trained to train the pedagogical advisors throughout the country as career counselors.

Some of the training institutions are developing their own systems for in-company train-of-trainers, including trainers in motivation, using also results and products from European Cooperation projects.

1.5 Requested quality certificates from the guidance institutions

At this stage, no certification for provision of career guidance is required from the training institutions (the licensing is obligatory only for training and certification in professional training).

2 Quality programmes in continuous and further group training in Bulgaria

In scope of continuous training in Bulgaria, **as a quality program can be regarded the procedure for provision of vocational education and training**, described in the Law for Vocational Education and Training, and in the regulations of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training. These procedures are drawn up for ensuring quality in VET, while provided by various institutions and for various age groups. These procedures are obligatory for all VET providers – Vocational schools, Vocational colleges, and Centers for vocational training, and are applied both for training of students and training for adults. In brief, these procedures cover:

- ◇ standards for the professions for which vocational training is provided
- ◇ standards for the required skills and competencies that have to be assured at the end of the training for each profession or part of profession
- ◇ standards for the duration of the training for each profession or part of profession, depending on the qualification stage
- ◇ standards for testing procedures and validation of the qualification
- ◇ standards for certification
- ◇ procedures for licensing of the training providers
- ◇ standards for the qualification of the trainers and tutors
- ◇ standards for the equipment of the training premises for training in each profession or part of profession

These standards are defined in several official documents, and are continuously improved. This assures the quality of the vocational training, independent from the providing institution.

3 Quality situation in guidance in group settings in Bulgaria

The described quality standards are still not covering the guidance measures, so at this stage the quality of the trainings is determined within the organization, and highly depends on the capacity of the training institution and the qualification of its trainers.

3.1 Existing problems on the system and meta level

Several problems on system and meta level can be identified in Bulgaria:

- ◇ There are no clear standards about the career guiding provision from the perspective of training curricula and capacity of the training providing institution excluding Universities.
- ◇ There is not enough methodical ensuring and ensuring quality of the career information and delivering guidance services.
- ◇ Lack of sustainability of the good practices – often closing and reorganizing existing administrative structure, open new administrative structures.
- ◇ Lack of systematic and coherent policies and practices and as a result weak coordination between the responsible institutions.
- ◇ Lack of enough and quality information.
- ◇ The motivation training (as well as the professional training) is not linked directly with the labour market situation, so its main goal – to reintegrate the trainee back into the labour market – is rarely reached as a result of the training

3.2 Suggestions by experts to improve the situation or solve the problems

In the last years the area of career guidance and activation made a great progress in the Laws and Regulations systems, and we believe that with the joined efforts of the Governmental institutions and the training providers, these regulatory acts will influence positively the practice in very short time.

After the conducted in 2007 peer review on the career guidance' policies in Bulgaria the team of experts (part of a project for Strengthening Career guidance policy in Bulgaria accomplished with the help of CROSS/CINOP, Holland) suggest several things to be done:

- ◇ Development of a unified national strategy vision and policy for career guidance
- ◇ Creating more effective links between all the institutions that support and organize career guidance in Bulgaria
- ◇ Making a proposal for a National Forum Career Guidance;
- ◇ Developing a model for career guidance.
- ◇ Providing a national career guidance policy document, which was done with the preparation of the road map of career guidance 2009-2013
- ◇ Better resource ensurance

4 Existing quality standards in guidance in group settings

The existing Quality Standards in Bulgaria are developed more at the level of laws and regulations than at the level of practical implementation. As existing standards can be identified:

Standard for:	Description	Described in:
Scope of activities for vocational orientation	The professional orientation, the vocational education and the professional training shall be carried out for professions and specialties included in the List of the professions for vocational education and training.	Law for Vocational Education and Training, Art. 6
Licensing of institutions providing training measures	The National Agency for vocational education and training has the right to issue and withdraw licenses for vocational training and professional orientation. The license gives the right to carry out and certify vocational education for acquiring degree of professional qualification or for professional orientation. The National Agency for vocational education and training	The procedure is described in details in Law for Vocational Education and Training, Art. 49a

	issues bulletin with published criteria, procedures and documentation for licensing of centers for vocational training and of centers for information and professional orientation.	
Registering of institutions providing vocational orientation	The National Agency for VET should create and maintain register for the centers for vocational training and of the centers for information and professional orientation	Law for Vocational Education and Training, Art. 42 p.10

No certification system exists for career guidance counselors who do not want to visit a course, but who would want to get a certificate (i.e. get their non-formally trained knowledge/skills/competences officially certified).

4.1 Quality certificates used in Bulgaria

At this stage in Bulgaria is issued the international Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF)' certificate for guidance counselors.

4.2 Quality efforts or individual quality programmes by the initiators, training institutions or trainers' organizations

In the last years, more and more training institutions are developing their internal quality standards, covering basically the content of the training, the qualification of the trainers, and the equipment of the training premises. These programs are of local influence, but as a whole give their contribution for the quality improvement on a concurrent basis.

A growing number of project in the field of career guidance on all level are realized in the last years such as:

- ◇ "Right Person in the Right Job - Train the trainers in the field of career guidance" - a Leonardo da Vinci Pilot project promoted by FO.FO.S. – Austria that aims to develop a curriculum which is training trainers who are active in the labour market programs.

- ◇ "Labour market" project (2002-2007) during which was created the universities career centers' net; profession "Career consultant" was introduced etc.
- ◇ "EMEVOC – e-manual for education and vocational counselling" – Leonardo da Vinci project which aim is to improve educational and vocational counseling in the partner countries and the EU.
- ◇ "QUINORA" (2005-2007)- International Quality Assurance Programme in Vocational Orientation and Guidance Measures for Job-Seekers on the System Level" – a Leonardo da Vinci Pilot project, promoted by abif – Austria.
- ◇ "Development of the policies in the feel of career guidance in Bulgaria" (2007-2009) – project was completed with the support of CROSS/CINOP, Holland
- ◇ "Attractive vocational guidance for pupils" (2008-2010) – a Leonardo da Vinci project, transfer of innovation, which aim is to promote the attractiveness and effectiveness of vocational guidance services for pupils by adapting an innovative guidance methodology.

5 Important quality domains in scope of guidance measures with regards to the specific problems in Bulgaria

We regard the following quality domains as most important for Bulgaria:

Category	
Policy for career guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ application of the activities envisaged in the road Map for career guidance ◇ establishing coherent system of guidance in all level ◇ establishing standards especially for the guidance services ◇ defining goals of the guidance measures
Planning and conceptualizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ defining the needs of the target groups ◇ training design ◇ design of course materials and handouts
Trainers' qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ educational background ◇ additional specific qualifications ◇ stages in trainers' qualification (leading trainer, supporting trainer, moderator, etc.) regarding

	trainers' qualification and practical experience
Evaluation of the training measures (result-oriented)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ continuous assessment and evaluation during the course ◇ feedback at the end of the training ◇ results evaluation at on-going base (6-12-18 months)

6 Bibliography:

1. Law for the vocational education and training
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3. National strategy on further vocational training 2005-2010
4. Report from peer review in Bulgaria "Development of the policies in the field of career guidance in Bulgaria", 2007
5. Road map for Career guidance in Bulgaria 2009-2013
6. Law of encouragement of employment
7. Ordinance for the conditions and the order for financing the training for acquisition of professional qualification and motivation training, organised by the agency for employment
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9. Program for development of education, science and youth policies in Bulgaria 2009-2013
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