



HOPE: Giving hope to victims of abuse through vocational guidance and counselling

Progress Report

Public Part

Project information

Project acronym:	HOPE
Project title:	HOPE: Giving hope to victims of abuse through vocational guidance and counselling
Project number:	516610-LLP-1-2011-ES-LEONARDO-LMP
Sub-programme or KA:	Leonardo da Vinci Multilateral Projects for Development of Innovation
Project website:	www.hope-guidance.eu
Reporting period:	From 01/10/2012 To 15/11/2012
Report version:	Public version
Date of preparation:	01/12/2012
Beneficiary organisation:	Universidad Miguel Hernández de Elche
Project coordinator:	María José López Sánchez
Project coordinator organisation:	Universidad Miguel Hernández de Elche
Project coordinator telephone number:	+34 966668006 (ext 9024)
Project coordinator email address:	maria.lopez@umh.es

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Executive Summary

Victims of abuse can access a number of specialist agencies, but vocational guidance sensitive to their situations is rare; most helping organisations support only women; and vocational guidance counsellors do not receive training in dealing with victims of abuse. Such specialists are needed to support career guidance and related networks (see CEDEFOP, 'Professionalising career guidance', 2009, p. 11).

One innovative character of this project lies in making the link between victims of abuse, vocational guidance and other helping organisations. Although members of this consortium have produced training and recommendations for vocational guidance in the areas of age, low paid work, refugees and migrants, and people at risk of social exclusion from other causes, our prior research discovered a gap in the training market for this particular difficulty for guidance-seekers.

Both men and women suffer abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, exploited work), and it is necessary to understand the effects of abuse in order to give the best possible support to guidance-seekers wishing to "return to life" or even start a life they never had before. Where possible and practicable, victims of abuse will be involved in the project, particularly in the testing phase.

The partners found organisations that support this target group, but not vocational guidance services, even though counsellors often come across clients who cannot complete the guidance process to become self-activating. They are aware of the need to raise confidence and self-esteem; but the "learned helplessness" of many victims of abuse raises particular barriers.

The aims of the project are to develop training, supported by a wide range of materials, for new or existing vocational guidance counsellors so that they know how to recognise and deal with the problems of adult clients with a history of abuse that hinders them from becoming self-activated, and understand the importance of networks of practitioners from different fields. The training course, which will be freely available online until at least 2019, will be written by experts and its development will be supported and validated by strategic groups in each country consisting of experts in both guidance and related fields, such as health, social work, police, education and victim support groups. The course will be widely disseminated through strategic networks, locally, nationally and throughout Europe. It will be incorporated into the practice of partners who carry out vocational training and guidance

The innovation, therefore, is three-fold: the provision of new training materials in a new area; the inclusion of both men and women as victims of abuse, in the labour market as well as in private; and networking between guidance and other helping services.

Table of Contents

1. PROJECT OBJECTIVES.....	6
2. PROJECT APPROACH.....	7
3. PROJECT OUTCOMES & RESULTS.....	8
4. PARTNERSHIPS	10
5. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE	11
6. CONTRIBUTION TO EU POLICIES	13
7. BACKGROUND.....	15

1. Project Objectives

In educational parlance, aims are the intentions and plans of the curriculum writer and objectives are the intended effects on the learning of the students.

The aims of the project are to develop training, supported by a wide range of materials, for new or existing vocational guidance counsellors so that they know how to recognise and deal with the problems of adult clients with a history of abuse that hinders them from becoming self-activated, and understand the importance of networks of practitioners from different fields. The training course, which will be freely available online until at least 2019, will be written by experts and its development will be supported and validated by strategic groups in each country consisting of experts in both guidance and related fields, such as health, social work, police, education and victim support groups. The course will be widely disseminated through strategic networks, locally, nationally and throughout Europe. It will be incorporated into the practice of partners who carry out vocational training and guidance.

One objective is that students of the course will be able to recognise that clients who present with obvious handicaps in terms of gender, age, ethnicity and so on may also carry invisible handicaps engendered by former abuse – and that clients who present with no obvious handicaps but are very difficult to counsel and to support in becoming self-activated may well be victims of abuse. They will learn to recognise the symptoms and to use appropriate methods to mitigate their effect so that such clients are able to become self-activating and make appropriate career decisions concerning vocational learning and employment. They will also recognise and put into practice the importance of networks of practitioners from different areas who encounter victims of abuse, in order to share expertise.

Another objective, essential to the achievement of the former, is to disseminate the course widely among guidance practitioners; to achieve sustainability through the strategic groups and dissemination to the strategic networks; and to incorporate the project results into the practice of partners and multipliers who carry out vocational guidance and training.

The situation previously described will be changed in that there will be a training resource for guidance counsellors faced with victims of abuse to help them to recognise the symptoms and use appropriate counselling methods. This will not change the fact of abuse but will enable its victims to receive an appropriate service in order to access vocational training and employment, and to become self-activated in making important career decisions. A small number of abuse victims will have benefited from our approach in the testing phase but it must be recognised that their rehabilitation is a long process that we in this project cannot attempt.

2. Project Approach

Research by partners has found statistics, articles and organisations concerning victims of abuse. It is widespread, affects both men and women and links to labour market failure in countries both in and outside the current consortium (for references see previous section). There are, however, three striking omissions from the practice discovered: victims of abuse can access a number of specialist agencies, but vocational guidance sensitive to their situations is rare; most helping organisations support only women; and vocational guidance counsellors do not receive training in dealing with victims of abuse. Such specialists are needed to support career guidance and related networks (see CEDEFOP, 'Professionalising career guidance', 2009, p. 11).

One innovative character of this project lies in making the link between victims of abuse, vocational guidance and other helping organisations. Although members of this consortium have produced training and recommendations for vocational guidance in the areas of age, low paid work, refugees and migrants, and people at risk of social exclusion from other causes, our prior research discovered a gap in the training market for this particular difficulty for guidance-seekers.

Both men and women suffer abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, exploited work), and it is necessary to understand the effects of abuse in order to give the best possible support to guidance-seekers wishing to "return to life" or even start a life they never had before. Where possible and practicable, victims of abuse will be involved in the project, particularly in the testing phase.

The partners have already found organisations that support this target group, but not vocational guidance services, even though counsellors often come across clients who cannot complete the guidance process to become self-activating. They are aware of the need to raise confidence and self-esteem; but the "learned helplessness" of many victims of abuse raises particular barriers.

Thus the action will provide a new learning opportunity, aimed at skills development for vocational guidance counsellors. The aim is to find a solution to the problem presented by victims of abuse, even if they are now survivors, of abuse, who wish to access the labour market or vocational education and training, but still face great barriers arising from their previous experiences.

The course will include new guidance tools and methods, drawn from a range of disciplines and developed specially for this project, supported by other materials of use to guidance counsellors, such as web sites, articles, case studies and research studies.

The innovation, therefore, is three-fold: the provision of new training materials in a new area; the inclusion of both men and women as victims of abuse, in the labour market as well as in private; and networking between guidance and other helping services.

3. Project Outcomes & Results

These are the outcomes, products and results:

1. HOPE Final Report (Confidential, not ended)
2. HOPE National Reports: Synthesis

This is a synthesis of all the national reports, to show similarities and perhaps differences between the countries of the partnership. It includes statistics, prevalent types of abuse, types of service for victims, case studies and good practice in assistance to victims. It is in all the project languages (English, Danish, German, Slovenian, Spanish and Swedish) and published on the web site for free download as well as reading. The separate national reports are also available, on the web site.

3. HOPE Theoretical Report

The report focus on the economic, social and psychological circumstances and effects of abuse. Available in all project languages

4. HOPE Tools and Methods of guidance for victims of abuse

A collection of tools (including exercises) and methods for vocational guidance counsellors seeking to help victims of abuse to enter VET or employment and to become future-oriented and self-activated. It will form an important resource for the course for vocational guidance counsellors. It will be available in all project languages (it is being translated)

5. HOPE course in vocational guidance for victims of abuse (not ended)

The electronic version of the course will consist of a curriculum in modular form, with instructions and guidelines for activities and links to the supporting materials on the web site. It will be designed to be studied in an average of 60 hours, either with a tutor or as self-directed learning. It will be in all the languages of the partnership and freely available for download.

6. HOPE: vocational guidance for victims of abuse (Good Practice Guide) (not ended)

These will be short printed booklets in all the partner languages, containing the curriculum and a sample of the activities and supporting materials. It is intended as a "taster" for the full course and will contain the web address and the contact details of the partners. It will also be available for free download from the web site in PDF.

7. HOPE: Final Evaluation Report (Confidential, not ended)

At the moment is prepared only the Progress Evaluation Report. It includes the Quality Management Plan, the results of questionnaires to partners and an evaluation of the progress of each work package, the partnership and all the products. It will also contain appendices consisting of questionnaires and templates used by the partnership, such as guidelines for collecting information and questionnaires to people testing the products.

8. HOPE: Vocational Guidance for victims of abuse leaflet. In all project languages

9. HOPE: Vocational Guidance for victims of abuse website. In all project languages

www.hope-guidance.es

10. Conference: HOPE. Giving hope to victims of abuse through vocational guidance.

It will be celebrated in Austria, the 12th of November, 2013

4. Partnerships

P1 : Universidad Miguel Hernández de Elche (Spain)

P2 : Folkuniversitetet kursverksamheten Lunds universitet (Sweden)

P3 : Anniesland Research Consultancy Limited (United Kingdom)

P4 : BEST Institut für berufsbezogene Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GmbH (Austria)

P5 : Universidad de Alicante (Spain)

P6 : PP/Peter Plant (Denmark)

P7 : Careers Europe (United Kingdom)

P8 : University of Primorska (Slovenia)

P9 : Ideen-Management (Germany)

This is a very high quality, multidisciplinary and committed consortium which worked together over many months to put together this project: everyone contributed preliminary research and dissemination and exploitation plans. All members are highly qualified, six to doctoral level, and five work full- or part-time or are affiliated to a university. Their academic disciplines include economics, sociology, social anthropology, psychology, organisation, pedagogy, adult education and vocational guidance. All are involved in extensive networks and have good contacts with relevant persons and organisations.

The following have extensive experience in the field of vocational guidance and personnel development, as practitioners and researchers: P2, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8 and P9. These have sound research experience, including in the field of vocational guidance: P1, P3, P6, P8 and P9. These have direct experience of the ultimate beneficiaries, victims of abuse, through previous or ongoing research or as members of voluntary groups: P1, P2, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8 and P9.

All have worked before on European projects and most of us have worked together in the past or are working together now. All team members have proved their quality and reliability.

5. Plans for the Future

Each partner has made an exploitation plan, aimed at creating and sustaining interest and the wish for others, as well as some of us, to adopt our results. We are confident that, with the same dedication to dissemination and ongoing contact with networks that has been shown in previous guidance projects, this project, will also have a long-term impact on the vocational guidance sector. In this sector, there is a great need for training, particularly in countries where the concept of vocational guidance is relatively new or undeveloped.

This will be enhanced by the presence in the partnership of practising guidance counsellors and academics in vocational guidance, who will use the products in their practice and teaching and spread it in their institutions thus developing good practice which also includes adaptation possibilities for other interested parties. The dissemination will be both horizontal and vertical, the products both practical and theoretical and well connected to this particular subject.

For example:

P1 UMH will incorporate the findings into the Servicio Intergral de la Mujer; Health Psychology Department; the annual International Congress on Gender, Work and Informal Economy's Observatory for Equal Opportunities, based at UMH; and the research group SIEG at UMH.

P2 Folk will use the products for counsellors and coaches who work in Folk with disadvantaged groups and rehabilitation. Within these groups they encounter victims of abuse but do not currently have the proper knowledge and tools to work with them. It will also help Folk to plan joint actions with the public employment service, the social office and the social insurance office.

P4 BEST will incorporate the tools and methods into the guidance they give in their centre for abused women.

P5 UA will incorporate HOPE products into Social Work course at the university; run a course in its senior programme; and incorporate it into training for volunteers through the Student Support Centre.

P6 PP/Peter Plant will include and use the project findings in the Master of Guidance programme of the University of Aarhus.

P7 Careers Europe will offer training to local guidance groups so that they can continue to deliver the course to guidance services in the area.

P8 UP FHS will offer training courses to different target groups (counsellors and those who provide vocational guidance). They will apply to the Ministry of Education for credit points and provide a programme within the Centre for Lifelong Education.

P9 WIP will offer training, in cooperation with umbrella organisations, in the methods to relevant organisations. They will also integrate all relevant methods and tools

developed in the project into their own consulting work, which includes social workers and consultants who may spread the methods.

6. Contribution to EU policies

Overall, Two LLP Horizontal policies area addressed in this project:

- Making provision for learners with special needs: The ultimate beneficiaries are people with special needs that are often disregarded: victims of abuse who are thereby, through adaptive psychological processes, handicapped from participation in vocational learning and the labour market.

- Promoting equality between men and woman and contributing to combating all forms of discrimination: Men as victims of abuse are often overlooked, partly because they feel even more shame than women and find it hard to admit. This project addresses the issues of both male and female victims of abuse. And thus should contribute to combating discrimination against difficult male as well as female guidance seekers.

Thirdly, this project shows complementarity with other policy such as, Education and Training 2020 Work programme by improving the quality and efficiency of education and training for vocational guidance counsellors; by promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship (regarding victims of abuse); by enhancing partnerships between education and training institutions and the broader society (since we are making connections with other organisations such as the police, hospitals and social work as well as guidance services)

In the context of Lisbon, the importance of the role of vocational guidance in general is clear and the CEDEFOP study quoted above notes that 'most contributors reported increased policy attention to career guidance and, in many cases, went on to detail legislation or strategic actions following from this attention'.

However, despite recent widespread publicity on a particular group of victims of abuse, those abused by priests and nuns, and the recognition that abuse has the capacity to wreck lives, there is still no official recognition that we can find that they require specialist help to enter vocational learning and employment. It is not, therefore, seen as a priority. At the same time it is often estimated that large numbers of people in Europe have been subjected to abuse of different kinds (RO National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons 2007; ES Ministerio de Igualdad 2009; LU Project de Loi No 5908; DK Helweg-Larsen, Larsen 2002 Unges trivsel år; Statistics Finland 2006; IS Ministry of Social Affairs 2008; UK Domestic Violence Statistics 2009, Women's Aid UK; Swedish Crime Barometer 2009; DE PKS Berichtsjahr 2008).

The issues addressed by this project exist all over Europe, as we have discovered through our research. There have already been European projects dealing with related issues:

“Promoting awareness for cooperation and training in the field of domestic violence” (2009) and “Long distance training in the treatment of sexual and physical abuse” (2000), which reinforce the pan-European nature of the problem.

There are particular benefits in a European-level approach for the following reasons, all deduced from long experience of European projects:

- different national education systems produce different approaches to knowledge acquisition, ranging from theoretical to pragmatic, and in past projects we have found great value in drawing on a range of approaches;
- although we have much in common, we will find useful types of organisation and practice in one country that are not found in another, and there will be a fruitful exchange of knowledge;
- the results of the project will be exploitable in all the partner countries as there will be materials in all the national languages and will be exploitable in most non-partner countries too where there are speakers of one of our 6 languages;
- dissemination through the Euroguidance network will ensure that we reach large numbers of practitioners throughout Europe and well beyond the partnership;
- we shall invite multipliers from several non-partner countries to the final conference, which will spread the results to the majority of EU/EEC related countries;
- all the partners have good English so communication within the partnership should not present any difficulty, and we are all accustomed to intercultural communication;
- our commitment to the target of the project overrides any cultural differences and there is no reason to suppose that cultural conflicts will emerge.

Any customisation for national cultural differences of the materials we produce will be informed through the testing phase and in particular by the strategic working groups throughout.



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



7. Background

A group of us working at European level has been discussing for some time gaps in the expertise and training of vocational guidance practitioners. There have been several projects on vocational guidance, many of them involving members of this consortium (Leonardo da Vinci projects Access to Vocational Guidance [1996 and 1998, www.gla.ac.uk/avg]; Workplace Guidance [2000 and 2002, www.gla.ac.uk/wg]; Refugee Guidance [2005, www.gla.ac.uk/rg]; and Third Age Guidance [2007, www.gla.ac.uk/tag]. All individual members of the consortium have been involved in at least one of these projects. One area still missing, however, is a focus on a section of society that cross-cuts social groups: victims of abuse.

We conducted some literature research in preparation for this project and found work on abuse in the context of health services, social services, the police and support groups such as Women's Aid, but not in the vocational guidance context. A recent publication, CEDEFOP, Professionalising career guidance, 2009, lent more weight to our ideas. It points out that "all clients have diverse needs, some of which may result in disadvantage or discrimination. Some needs are apparent to others, and may be the subject of legislation and codes of practice. Other needs may be hidden, and may include complex issues such as self-stereotyping ... The requirement for the career guidance practitioner is to extend their knowledge and understanding to the fullest reasonable extent in their work situation and to strive constantly for the highest degree of reflection on their own practice" (p 77). It is notable that this document refers to specialised guidance for unemployed and disabled people, women, older people and refugees but makes no direct reference to our target group.

The term "abuse" here covers a wide range of situations, including but not limited to domestic abuse, sexual degradation and severe exploitation in the labour market. Many victims, after leaving the abusive situation, have difficulty moving into education or the mainstream labour market, and so present a problem for vocational guidance. One explanation is that of "learned helplessness" (Miller, Seligman 1975, *JnlAbPsy* 84), which affects most victims. In order to mitigate the effects of the abuse, people learn to behave helplessly.

As a result they feel they have no control, are depressed, fatalistic and passive, lack self-esteem, confidence and motivation. This affects their cognitive abilities, including problem-solving, acquiring knowledge and learning to change. The effects outlive the abusive situation. This problem has been selected over others because the partnership has already tackled other areas of difficulty and young and unemployed people have long been target areas for guidance. We know from our own and others' experience, both as counsellors and as teachers, that some people seem unable to learn, to move on, to make plans, even though there are no apparent impediments in their life circumstances or intellectual capacity.

This project, therefore, aims to support the training of vocational guidance counsellors in supporting victims of abuse; to link guidance with other helping agencies, such as health services, social work, education, psychologists, the police

and special needs support groups; and to incorporate men as well as women into consideration of the labour market effects of abuse. It will thus engage with the CEDEFOP recommendation to enhance “cooperation between a range of agencies and individuals” (p. 19) through the formation of strategic working groups drawn from different types of agency to inform and comment on the progress of our work.

