

European Lifelong Guidance Policies, the New Skills Agenda and the revision of Europass: State of play

KEY FINDINGS

- There is increasing international **evidence and consensus** that career guidance and the systematic development of career management skills leads to more effective educational and employment outcomes.
- As analysis of selected policy documents (Council, European Parliament) suggests **career guidance is a relevant policy element within skills, education, employment and youth policies**. Consequently, the role of guidance is stressed in important policy including early school leaving, the Youth Guarantee, the New Skills Agenda for Europe **and now in the proposal for a revision of the Europass framework**.
- **European policies for Lifelong Guidance** have been promoted by **two Council Resolutions (2004, 2008)** and by structured cooperation for their implementation undertaken by the **European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network** (2007- end of funding 2015). ELGPN has produced a number of European reference tools and Member States have reported a positive impact on guidance policy development. A second network of **national Euroguidance centres** (since 1992) has a more operational profile with a focus on transnational mobility.
- Despite progress achieved, there is evidence of a **persisting delivery gap in guidance provision** in the Member States as consolidation and completion of policy reforms take time. The implementation of the Council Resolution (2008) has not been evaluated so far.
- **How EU support for future (lifelong) guidance policy development will continue depends on the concrete cooperation structures at European level**. In its proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and the Council on the **revision of the Europass framework**, the Commission **commits itself to support career guidance policy and system development** in cooperation with Member States. This may become an opportunity to enhance guidance policies and services in the context of transnational mobility, provided that a state-of-the-art concept of guidance policies is applied and that Euroguidance has a clearly defined role. The Commission is currently exploring different options. A sustainable implementation of the Council Resolutions on lifelong guidance policies may, however, require a broader approach and an own cooperation structure at European level to foster quality guidance provision for citizens in education, at work or looking for a job.

1. LIFELONG GUIDANCE AND CAREER MANAGEMENT SKILLS: CONCEPT AND POLITICAL RELEVANCE

There is **increasing international consensus that effective guidance programmes have a positive impact** on educational, economic, employment and social outcomes. As the OECD puts it in a section dedicated to innovation in education, *'career guidance can help*

*to make the best use of human resources in the labour market as well as in education by allowing better matches between skills and interests and opportunities for work and learning'. Cedefop underlines in a briefing note of December 2014 another aspect: the contribution of guidance to cope with challenges in times of instability, as it enhances *practice adaptability* and improves the effectiveness of education, training and employment policy programmes¹.*

Evidence from research suggests that guidance in schools contributes to increasing student participation, performance and progression. . It helps young people and parents to navigate permeable pathways of education and training and qualification systems. In general, lifelong guidance provision has a positive impact on managing transitions within and between schools, training and education institutions, between jobs in case of job changes, and from unemployment / inactivity to employment.²

Lifelong guidance refers to '*a continuous process that enables citizens at any age and at any point of 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 those capacities and competences are learned and/or used*'.³

Over the last decade, "**career management skills**" have received increasing attention as research argued that earnings variation in OECD countries may be partly explained by people's ability to build, manage and deploy their skills, not by education and qualification alone. This implies a wider focus of career guidance with a view to systematic career education starting in schools and to be continued at work as well as in the context of employment services when enabling jobseekers to effective job search and developing their employability⁴.

Lifelong guidance programmes encompass a multi-dimensional approach:

- **Cooperation and coordination** of stakeholders (education, employment, social) for policy development and service delivery at all levels to make access to services easy for all citizens and to bridge the gap between education and the world of work
- **Legislation and organisational rules** (e.g. citizen entitlement to career guidance, career education in curricula, activation and individual action planning in employment services)
- **Service delivery concepts and tools** (e.g. 'multi-channel' or 'blended service delivery concepts' combining web portals including information about occupations and the labour market, training paths, tools for self-assessment with interactive e- and face-to-face interventions such as individual career guidance; group information and counselling or webinars)
- Effective lifelong guidance provision requires **programmes and policies in a cross-cutting perspective as well as in each of the relevant fields**: 1. education (schools), 2. vocational education and training, 3. higher education, 4. Adult learning, 5. employment (for working people, older workers and unemployed) and 6. social inclusion (e.g. early school leaving and dropout, long-term unemployed or disabled), 7. transnational mobility in education and employment (e.g. ERASMUS, EURES, Euroguidance).

2. CAREER GUIDANCE PROVISION - AN INGREDIENT OF EUROPEAN SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

European policy initiatives point to the importance of quality guidance provision for all citizens as an essential prerequisite for an effective implementation of skills and employment policies. There is a widely shared consensus on this point in all relevant resolutions and

recommendations on education, training and employment issued by the European Parliament and the Council.

Council Recommendations for skills development and labour market integration point to the need for quality guidance provision

Guidance is referred to in a direct (or indirect) manner in all documents adopted by the Council with regard to youth unemployment, early school leaving, and education and skills policies to improve the match of skills demand and supply⁵:

Council Recommendations / Resolutions	Guidance and related aspects
New Skills Agenda: Council Recommendation Upskilling pathways for adult (2016)	Three steps are needed: skills assessment; provision of a tailored, flexible and quality learning offer; and validation and recognition of skills acquired. These could be facilitated by guidance and support measures .
Council Recommendation Integration long-term unemployed (2016)	Individual assessment and approach: Employment services, together with other partners supporting labour-market integration, provide personalised guidance to those concerned.
Council Recommendation European Youth Guarantee (2013)	Ensure that young people have full access to information about the services and support available by strengthening cooperation between employment services, career guidance providers . Develop partnerships between public and private employment services, education and training institutions, career guidance services and with other specialised youth services ... that help smooth the transition from unemployment, inactivity or education into work. Enable employment services , together with other partners supporting young people, to provide personalised guidance .
Council Declaration Alliance for Apprenticeship (2013)	Facilitating the participation of young people with fewer opportunities by providing career guidance , preparatory training and other targeted support.
Council Recommendation Early School Leaving (2011)	Early warning mechanisms and targeted support for pupils at risk ; mentoring, guidance and counselling to support students' career choices and transitions
Council Conclusions on investing in education and training (2013) (Rethinking Education)	Reducing the number of low-skilled adults ... by providing information on access to lifelong learning services, such as information on the validation of non-formal and informal learning and career guidance .
Council Resolution on New Skills for New Jobs (2007)	Supporting jobseekers by providing them with vocational guidance and a personal training plan , which should identify the competence modules required to move to new jobs where there are skills gaps

European Parliament Resolutions call for establishing better guidance

The same holds true for Parliament Resolutions: In all resolutions dedicated to youth employment, early school leaving and rethinking education the Parliament calls upon Member States to⁶:

- establish better guidance and tailored career service centres
- equip young people with the right information, advice and guidance including on employment opportunities to make sound career choices and to motivate them to study and to acquire vocational training
- promote programmes providing vocational guidance and support for learners in choosing a career
- better career guidance and high-quality work-experience schemes to tackle early school leaving
- appropriate and ongoing training of careers guidance counsellors so that they can proactively engage with potential early school leavers
- special career guidance courses in primary and secondary schools and higher education institutions; mentoring schemes and career guidance for women to reduce gender stereotypes in education

Recent resolutions on the EU youth strategy and on policies for skills development underline the importance of quality lifelong guidance provision for education and training, skills assessment and documentation including the use of Europass.

Given existing gaps, the European Parliament points to a **need for further development of guidance systems**. It calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop high-quality and targeted career guidance and to enhance the exchange of best practices.

European Parliament Resolutions	Guidance and related aspects
Resolution on the assessment of the EU Youth Strategy 2013-2015 (2016)	<p>Stresses the need to combat early school leaving [...] by realising a strong and well-developed personalised guidance system with high-quality counselling and orientation services for all students, especially at the first signs of student dropout, by adequately informing students about future labour market opportunities and career paths, including technical and artisanal job profiles.</p> <p>Underlines that, in order to tackle youth unemployment, Member States need well-trained career guidance personnel.</p> <p>Urges the Member States to fully implement and monitor the effectiveness of the Youth Guarantee – for example – creating lifelong, tailor-made career guidance systems.</p>
Resolution on skills policies to fight youth unemployment (2016)	<p>Recalls that good quality educational tailor-made guidance and support at all stages of education and training is necessary.</p> <p>Points out the lack of high-quality career guidance in the Member States; emphasises the need to improve the quality of career guidance in schools and to provide ongoing professional training for careers advisors.</p> <p>Calls on the Member States to examine best practices in the school career guidance system where pupils are monitored from an early school stage to the first steps in the labour market.</p>

	<p>Recalls that lifelong guidance on professional career development should be available over the whole working life to maintain and develop one's skills and knowledge;</p> <p>Stresses the need to develop measures to encourage girls to engage in STEM subjects and establish quality career guidance to support them in continuing their professional careers in this field.</p>
<p>Resolution on creating a competitive labour market for the 21st century (2015)</p>	<p>Notes that the European policies for Lifelong Guidance have had a considerable impact on national guidance policies and that effective lifelong guidance requires programmes in a cross-cutting perspective at all levels.</p> <p>Recalls that it is of utmost importance to give tailor-made guidance and counselling to jobseekers on how to look for a job or on which further education and training to undertake [using] for validation 'competences passports' such as the Europass</p> <p>Stresses the importance of career orientation and work [...] in order to ensure that young people are equipped with the right information, advice and guidance to make sound career choices;</p> <p>Calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop high-quality and targeted career guidance throughout the education cycle to help young people take the right decisions with regard to their education and career choices.</p>

3. EUROPEAN GUIDANCE POLICIES - COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS AND COOPERATION STRUCTURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Two Council Resolutions as basis for European Lifelong Guidance Policies

During the last decade, policy development in lifelong guidance has gained momentum at European level as policy reviews had identified that guidance provision in the Member States was often too fragmented and uneven to fulfill its functions.

The Council adopted two Resolutions (2004, 2008)⁷:

The **Council Resolution of 2004** on '*Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the field of Guidance throughout life in Europe*' defined the concept and set out the key objectives of a lifelong guidance policy in Europe. Further, it called for building up European structures for policy coordination.

The **Council Resolution of 2008** on '*Better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies*' calls on Member States to strengthen the role of guidance setting out four priority areas:

1. Acquisition of career management skills,
2. Facilitation of access to guidance services,
3. Development of quality assurance in guidance,
4. Encouragement of cooperation and coordination among stakeholders.

In its resolution, the Council invites the Member States and the Commission **to strengthen European cooperation in lifelong guidance provision**, in particular through the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) set up in 2007.

Comparing with the Council Recommendations on EQF (2008) and the Europass Decision (2004), No evaluation of implementation of the Council Resolution (2008) has been carried out so far

European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) - A driver for policy development in the Member States (2007 - 2015)

The ELGPN, funded by a Commission grant between 2007 and 2015, can be considered as a **unique Member-State driven network**. Contrasting with other informal expert groups established by the Commission, it was created by Member States as a bottom-up initiative and consequently coordinated by a secretariat appointed by the member countries. The European Commission (DG Education and Culture) supported the network through a grant under the Lifelong Learning Programme and later under Erasmus+. Following the reorganisation of the Commission, ELGPN was placed under the responsibility of DG Employment at the end of 2014.

ELGPN aimed at assisting the EU Member States (plus neighbouring countries) and the European Commission in the development of lifelong guidance policies through mutual learning initiatives focused on the priorities defined in the 2008 Council Resolution on Lifelong Guidance. It brought together **policymakers and a number of dedicated NGOs from 30 countries** (plus Switzerland as observer) bridging the gap between education and employment. Each member country nominated up to three representatives from education ministries and labour ministries, some from NGOs. Since 2009, representatives from two Commission Directorates General, DG Education and Culture and DG Employment and Social Affairs, participated at the plenary meetings, thus illustrating the **link between education and employment** at Commission level⁸.

The network has produced a number of common **European reference tools for policy development and implementation** based on the combined knowledge and experience of the Member States as well as **Concept notes** connecting lifelong guidance issues with European policy priorities (e.g. Youth Guarantee, Early School Leaving). The common European reference tools include "**A European Resource Kit - Lifelong Guidance Policy Development**" (2012); "**The Evidence Base on Lifelong Guidance: Guide to Key Findings for Effective Policy and Practice**" (2014) which combined research findings from Europe and beyond; . and **Guidelines for Policies and Systems Development in Lifelong Guidance (2015)** which provides comprehensive advice for national policy and systems development⁹.

These European reference tools have inspired national developments. A **survey at the end of the funding period in 2015 demonstrated considerable impact of structured European policy cooperation**: 17 EU member countries (AT, CY, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, HR, HU, IS, IT, NO, PL, PT, RO, SK) report that the ELGPN work has had *significant* influence on national policies on lifelong guidance, and all other countries list concrete examples of *some* impact. Further, most member-countries have established **National Guidance Fora** or other national co-ordination mechanisms to better coordinate existing services and strategy development in often fragmented guidance landscapes. Many of these mechanisms were in a building-up phase when funding ended in 2015¹⁰.

The impact achieved can be explained by the **specific working methodology of the network**. The network as a whole had a management structure, a **clearly defined work programme, continuous working groups** supported by **continuous lead experts** on the priorities defined by the Council Resolution 2008. The working groups developed **European reference tools based upon an agreement of representatives from all member countries** including good practices. Further, what is even more important, they had a **systematic exchange on activities and factors for successful implementation** including main obstacles.

During the final year 2015, two **options of a lighter format of cooperation** were discussed at ELGPN plenary meetings:

1. The Commission proposed a **Commission-led working group** as potential option for future cooperation in the field of career guidance.

2. ELGPN suggested to create an **Advisory group** composed of representatives from the education and the employment sectors, European social partners and other relevant stakeholders. Annual or biennial conferences could convene representatives of relevant national ministries.

Network of national Euroguidance centres- focus on transnational mobility guidance, information collection and professionalisation

In 1992, the Commission set up the European network of National Guidance Centres under the PETRA programme for the vocational training of young people and their preparation for adult working life. Currently, grant-based **Euroguidance centres exist in 34 countries** (68 centres) with most of the centres being hosted under Ministries of Education or Employment.

The network focuses mainly on one field of lifelong guidance: **transnational guidance to support learner mobility**. The main objective is to promote the **European dimension in guidance** including the **use of European tools** (e.g. Europass). Euroguidance collects and provides online information on opportunities for learning mobility (PLOTEUS platform) and on guidance systems and services in the Member States. Further, the network organises activities to enhance the EU transnational **knowledge and competences of guidance practitioners** and promotes **cooperation of guidance services in Europe**. Its publications include, for example, competence diagnostics, counselling methods to fight youth unemployment, promoting career management skills. A **strategic working group** is responsible for planning and making the link to guidance policies and previously, to ELGPN.

Representatives meet once or twice a year at Euroguidance conferences. There is some overlap in membership with ELGPN facilitating a connection with policy development. In 2016, the Euroguidance network meeting organised by the Ministry of Education in cooperation with Euroguidance Netherlands, was dedicated to a more system-oriented topic "*Regional cross-sectoral cooperation on lifelong guidance*" showing the **potential to promote ELGPN work at a smaller scale**.

Further, the Commission supports innovation in guidance service delivery through **Erasmus+ grants**¹¹.

4. GAPS IN GUIDANCE PROVISION - NEED FOR A STRATEGIC LONG-TERM POLICY DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

Despite progress made through European cooperation in the ELGPN, considerable gaps in service delivery remain. A Eurobarometer survey (2014) shows that existing **career guidance provision does not match citizens' needs in Europe**.

Only one in four respondents (**24 %**) used a **career guidance service** at some point, mostly while they were still in education, followed by those looking for a job. More highly educated are more likely to have used a career guidance service showing a need to better reach low-skilled. The findings vary considerably for individual Member States, reaching from a high of 55 % in Denmark and 47% in Sweden to a low of 3 % in Hungary and Bulgaria. Almost one in two citizens (45 %) indicated **lack of access as main reason for not using services**. According to another study by the European Parliament, quality career guidance based on labour market information is reportedly not available to most VET students¹².

However, in the Eurobarometer survey, **most citizens (71 %) agreed that career guidance services are useful** for making the right choice for further studies and 62 % think that they are useful for finding a job, and 53 % - for finding opportunities to work or to study in another country¹³.

One factor helping to explain the discrepancy between delivery capacities and citizen needs is the **state of policy reforms**. Many reforms launched as a result of ELGPN cooperation

and tools were at an initial stage and / or incomplete. As in other policy and systems developments (e.g. European Qualification Framework, implementation of the Youth Guarantee, capacity building of Public Employment Services, education and VET reform), **reforms in guidance policies and systems take time** as they are complex and involve many actors (education, training, employment, social).

5. THE NEW SKILLS AGENDA - STATE OF PLAY AND PERSPECTIVES FOR EUROPEAN GUIDANCE POLICIES

An analysis of the most recent skills policy package issued by the European Commission, the *New Skills Agenda for Europe*, provides indications on the way forward at EU-level.

The New Skills Agenda for Europe (2016) underlines the role of guidance as supporting service and 'promoter' for EU tools and services

The *New Skills Agenda for Europe* continues a series of skills related policy packages having been launched by the Commission during the last decade (*Agenda New Skills for New Jobs* - 2008, *Agenda New Skills and New Jobs* - 2010, *Rethinking Education: investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes* - 2012).¹⁴

The comprehensive Agenda addresses a number of **clearly defined, evidence-based challenges related to skills levels and relevance** hampering individual development, economic growth and social cohesion in Europe: 70 million adults in the EU lack adequate reading and writing skills and even more digital skills in times of declining demand for elementary jobs. 25 % of highly qualified young adult employees are overqualified for their job and 40 % of employers in Europe experience difficulties to find ICT specialists pointing to skills mismatches. There is a lack of attractiveness of VET and limited learning and employment mobility partially due to gaps in transnational skills validation and recognition.

Ten specific key actions have been launched in 2016 or will be launched in 2017 in the areas of skills intelligence, transparency and skills formation. While a part of these continue, deepen or adjust existing initiatives or legal acts, others represent new strategies:

1. Commission proposal for a *Council Recommendation on establishment of a Skills Guarantee for low-skilled adults* (new, issued in June 2016). The Council adopted its Recommendation on *Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults* in December 2016 softening the original approach of a guarantee while keeping key elements.¹⁵
2. Commission proposal for the *revision of the European Qualifications Framework* - EQF (issued in June 2016, political agreement by Council under preparation, European Parliament report ongoing).
3. *Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals* (new; - originally planned for June 2016, postponed to first half of 2017).
4. Commission proposal for a decision by the European Parliament and the Council on a *framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications* - *revision of Europass* (launched in October 2016 - political agreement by the Council and Report by the European Parliament under preparation).
5. *Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition*", a multi-stakeholder partnership (launched in December 2016, building upon the work of the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs).
6. *Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills* (being piloted in six sectors).
7. Commission proposal to *make VET more attractive* (planned for 2nd quarter of 2017).
8. *Commission proposal to review* of the Recommendation on Key Competences (planned for the 4th quarter of 2017).

9. Commission proposal on *graduate tracking* (planned for the 2nd quarter of 2017)
10. Commission proposal to further analyse and exchange best practices on *effective ways to address brain drain* (planned for end of 2016).

The New Skills Agenda **confirms the role of guidance** either **as essential supporting service** (e.g. up-skilling adults, guidance for prospective students to reduce mismatches in higher education), **or as user and promoter of European programmes and tools** (e.g. European labour market intelligence, Europass). Putting guidance into a broader perspective, it says that “*investment in education and training systems, anticipation of skills need, matching and guidance services are [...] fundamental in order to raise productivity, competitiveness, economic growth and ultimately employment.*”¹⁶

From a guidance perspective, the most relevant action launched so far, is the **Commission proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass)**. To put it in a nutshell, the European Commission envisages to move “*Europass from a document-based facility into a service-based platform, widening its scope of activities*”.¹⁷

The **original Europass framework** is known as a set of documents to increase the transparency and comparability of skills and qualifications in order to facilitate learning and working mobility, consisting of the Europass CV (60 million CVs created since 2005), Europass Language Passport, Europass Certificate Supplement for VET certificates, Europass Diploma Supplement issued by higher education institutions and the Europass Mobility Document for recording learning and training stays abroad. A **network of national Europass centres**, located in different institutions such as European or international agencies for education, institutes for VET, agencies for higher education etc. serve as contact points.

The “**new**” **Europass framework** (see graph below) shall become **a modern, more comprehensive and integrated European online platform** bringing together an enlarged set of web-based tools for skills documentation and self-assessment, information on learning opportunities, occupational and skills trends (including web-crawling and big data analysis). In this regard it is similar to some national occupation and skills portals while its focus is on **learning and employment mobility in Europe**.

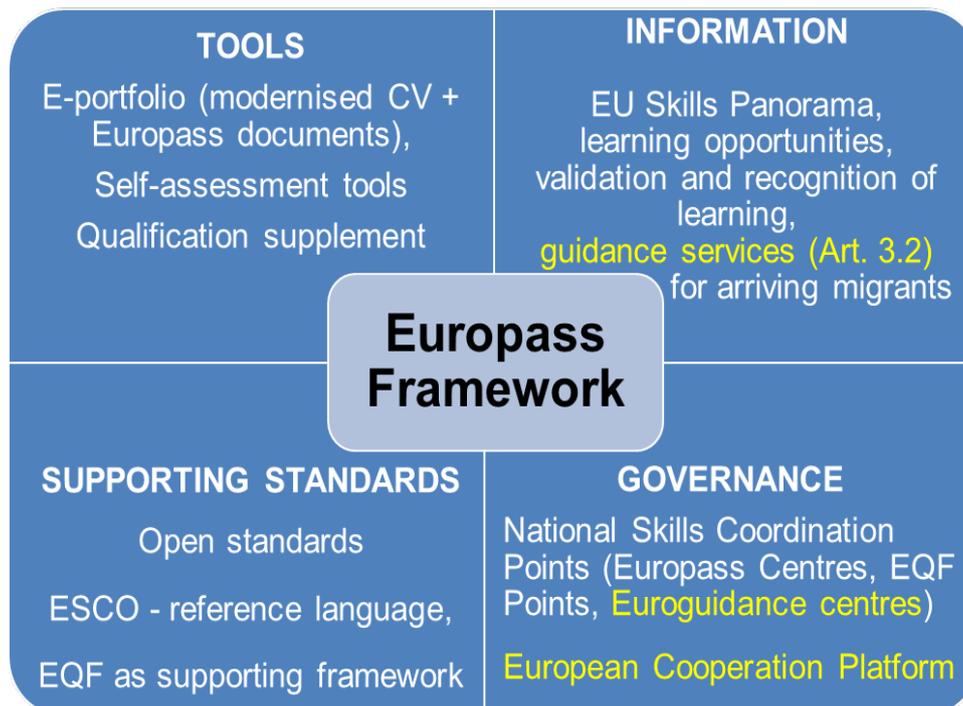
In addition, the portal comprises **supporting standards and reference instruments**. The Commission plans to develop **open standards** for qualifications, job vacancies and CVs. Other European initiatives shall serve as supporting reference to increase transparency and comparability of skills documentation across Europe: ESCO and EQF. **ESCO** (European multilingual Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations classification) is a Commission initiative launched by DG Employment in the context of Europe 2020. The Commission is currently testing ESCO in pilot projects. **EQF** (European Qualifications Framework) is education-based and was launched by a Recommendation by the European Parliament and the Council of 23 April 2008.

In order to improve coordination, the Commission has proposed a **new governance mechanism** in order to better integrate and connect **the various European and national actors and projects involved** in the area of skills and qualifications:

1. EQF: National EQF contact points European Advisory Board (including validation of non-formal and informal learning) + EQF Advisory group (EU expert group)
2. Europass: National Europass centres (no EU-level structure)
3. Euroguidance: National Euroguidance centres (no EU-level structure)
4. ESCO : no national structure, EU-level Board and Working Group managed by the Commission
5. European Skills Panorama: Execution by Cedefop, funded by DG Employment

At European level, the European Commission commits itself to set up a **single expert group**, the **European platform of cooperation with the Member States** to implement and monitor the implementation of the Europass framework.¹⁸ A well-functioning governance mechanism at European level could ensure an adequate, coordinated input by the Member States to this process. The **Commission will be responsible** for most of the development work to be undertaken (see Art. 7). Moreover, a **considerable part of coordination will have to be carried by the Commission**, for example as regards an overlap between the different European online platforms in the area of skills and competences.¹⁹

**COMMISSION PROPOSAL FOR A REVISED EUROPASS FRAMEWORK:
A EUROPEAN-WIDE SKILLS AND OCCUPATIONS PORTAL**



(Compilation by the author)

At national level, **National Skills Coordination Points** will be established to function as single line for budget allocation and grant administration and to coordinate Europass activities at national level, comparable to the Youth Guarantee coordinators having been nominated in each Member State to support implementation.²⁰ The new governance mechanism shall help to **simplify both, grant administration and strategic communication** and moreover, to increase effectiveness and user-friendliness. In 12 countries, already today all three national centres (Europass, Euroguidance, EQF contact points) are hosted in one organisation / authority. Further, the proposal underlines **compliance with the principle of subsidiarity**: Member States can maintain the current situation, but are asked to nominate one of the current, separate centres as lead partner. During the public consultation, **Euroguidance** expressed concerns that Member States could decide to shift resources from Euroguidance to other centres / contact points (Europass, EQF) depending on national priorities so that a full EU coverage is no longer guaranteed.

Overall, **Member States shall be responsible** for the implementation at national level, i.e. to designate and manage the National Skills Coordination Points, to coordinate the different centres, to ensure provision of data and information (e.g. on guidance systems, learning opportunities), to ensure access of users to relevant information and to contribute to evaluation.

The **proposal is based upon results from comprehensive consultations and research** including a public consultation (2014), an evaluation of the existing Europass framework (2013), a study on the feasibility of streamlining online European online tools and services (2015) and several targeted consultations in 2016. **No impact assessment** has been carried out.

European support for guidance policies: relevant change, open questions

On the one hand, the proposal implies a fundamental change as **guidance policy gains a legally binding status at European level**: The Commission commits itself in cooperation with Member States *“to support the development of guidance policy and guidance services”* Probably, outcomes from the public consultation have contributed to this development: civil society organisations and relevant policy networks (EQF, Europass, Euroguidance) all underlined the need to focus on (face-to-face) guidance in order to complement online services.

On the other hand, there is need for further concretisations to assess the **scope of Commission support for guidance policies within this framework**:

1. **Guidance concept**: Currently, there is **no specification of the underlying concept of guidance policy** in the Commission proposal. As the revised Europass framework aims at facilitating learning and employment mobility, the focus will presumably be on one field of lifelong guidance policies: on transnational mobility guidance - which is not an isolated service, but forms part of a lifelong guidance system.
2. **Difference between lifelong guidance policies, services and tools**: Guidance policies shape service provision in every country and the access of citizens to services in career centres, schools or public employment services over the whole life span. These services in turn use technical tools and references such as Europass, EQF or labour market intelligence tailoring them to the concrete individual needs. It would be necessary to specify these distinctions in the new governance mechanism including a potential need of adjustment of the role of Euroguidance.
3. **The role of the working methodology**: It should be explored, how a more **generalist European cooperation platform**, as in the Commission proposal, can support system and policy development in **specific fields**, such as transnational mobility guidance. As the experience of the EQF Advisory Group, ESCO, ELGPN and other cooperation structures shows, **continuity of (working) groups and supporting experts together with external country reviews** of existing systems is important.

A Sustainable implementation of the Council Resolutions on lifelong guidance policies may, however, require a **broader approach and an own cooperation structure** at European level to foster quality guidance provision for citizens at schools, in VET or higher education, at work or looking for a job.

Currently, the **Commission is exploring options** for future support of systematic European cooperation on lifelong guidance policy development within the Europass framework.

- 1 OECD: <http://www.oecd.org/edu/innovation-education/34050171.pdf>;
<http://www.oecd.org/edu/innovation-education/19975192.pdf>;
Cedefop: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/9094>.
- 2 <http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/elgpn-tools-no-3.-the-evidence-base-on-lifelong-guidance/>.
- 3 Council Resolution Guidance 2008: [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:42008X1213\(02\)&from=EN](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:42008X1213(02)&from=EN).
- 4 <http://www.oecd.org/edu/innovation-education/19975192.pdf>; PISA:
<http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/elgpn-research-paper-no.-1-pisa/>.
- 5 Youth Guarantee: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF>;
Alliance Apprenticeships:
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/139011.pdf; Early school leaving:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:191:0001:0006:en:PDF>.
- 6 Resolution Youth Employment: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2014-0010+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>;
Early school leaving: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2011-0531+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>;
Rethinking Education: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bTA%2bP7-TA-2013-0433%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN>;
Higher education systems: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bTA%2bP7-TA-2012-0139%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN>.
- 7 Council Resolution Guidance 2008: [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:42008X1213\(02\)&from=EN](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:42008X1213(02)&from=EN); Council Resolution 2004:
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%209286%202004%20INIT>.
- 8 <http://www.elgpn.eu/>.
- 9 Resource Kit: http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/ELGPN_resource_kit_2011-12_web.pdf;
Tool Evidence Base: <http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/elgpn-tools-no-3.-the-evidence-base-on-lifelong-guidance/>;
Concept Notes: <http://www.elgpn.eu/publications>;
Guidelines: <http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/elgpn-tools-no-6-guidelines-for-policies-and-systems-development-for-lifelong-guidance/>.
- 10 ELGPN Summative Report: <http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/elgpn-summative-report-2007-2015>.
- 11 https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/forward-looking-cooperation-projects-2017-eacea412016_en.
- 12 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/documents/cult/dv/esstdualeducation/esstdualeducationen.pdf.
- 13 Eurobarometer: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_417_en.pdf.
- 14 Agenda for New Skills and Jobs (2010): http://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:776df18f-542f-48b8-9627-88aac6d3ede0.0003.03/DOC_1&format=PDF; New Skills for New Jobs (2008):
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=1496&langId=en>.
- 15 Council Recommendation Upskilling pathways: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016H1224%2801%29&from=EN>; Commission proposal - Skills Guarantee:
<https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2016/EN/1-2016-382-EN-F1-1.PDF>.
- 16 New Skills Agenda - Communication: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=15621&langId=en>, pg. 5, 16; Staff Working Document: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=15691&langId=en>, pg. 30f.
- 17 Commission proposal Europass revision: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=16255&langId=en>, pg. 3; Staff Working Document: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=16256&langId=en>.
- 18 Commission proposal Europeass revision, recital (27).
- 19 Staff Working Document, pg. 14.
- 20 National Youth Guarantee Coordinators: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=11490&langId=en>.

DISCLAIMER

The content of this document is the sole responsibility of the author and any opinions expressed therein do not necessarily represent the official position of the European Parliament. It is addressed to Members and staff of the EP for their parliamentary work. Reproduction and translation for non-commercial purposes are authorised, provided the source is acknowledged and the European Parliament is given prior notice and sent a copy.

