

BERATUNG  
GUIDANCE  
DORADZTWO

DIALOGUE

BESSERE CHANCEN FÜR  
BILDUNG UND BERUF  
DURCH BERATUNG



# GUIDANCE DIALOGUE

Promotion of subject-orientated guidance  
on education, career and continuing education  
and training from the viewpoint of the unions

[www.guidance-dialogue.eu](http://www.guidance-dialogue.eu)



OGB



Unternehmen für Bildung.

In the Guidance Dialogue project the partner organisations have set themselves the goal of strengthening international dialogue on the subject of guidance on vocational education and training (VET) and continuing education and training (CET).

By pooling the professional expertise of the partner organisations and involving external specialists from the academic sphere and practitioners, guidelines are created for designing and further developing VET and CET guidance programmes. This work is seen as a contribution to the formation of educational guidance approaches and structures, initially in the three countries involved in the EU project – Germany, Austria and Poland – but beyond as well.

In order to provide the impetus for national policies and strategies under the different framework conditions and starting points, theories were formulated which, however, still require specification for the regional or national conditions given in each case or require appropriate terminological clarification. Overall these aim at an understanding of guidance which focuses on the specific, guidance-seeking people irrespective of whether the guidance takes place in a company context, in professional guidance organisations or as part of labour market administration authorities.



## CENTRAL THEMES

**1. Programme, not barrier.** The requirement of constantly taking up learning processes throughout one's lifetime presents everyone with the situation of having to repeatedly make decisions in an increasingly complicated educational landscape. For this reason, quality guidance services should be offered in the public service remit. But at the same time, a comprehensive concept of lifelong guidance should not lead to sustained or structural dependencies on guidance expertise; nor, against the background of an emerging market in guidance programmes, should every decisionmaking situation become an institutionalised motive for guidance.

**2. Preserving the freedom of individuals.** People's decisions concerning the development of their personal competences and professionally guided reflection on developing this must preserve their personal authority. Labour market, social or education policy objectives should have a place in guidance processes while based on facts, but should never determine or overrule individual decision-making. Correspondingly, for example, because of their different mandates, vocational guidance or educational counselling and work placement might not necessarily be institutionally, but should always be implemented separately from each other, from a systemic point of view.

**3. Clarity and reliability.** In connection with information, guidance and orientation on education and career, there is justifiable talk of a broad range of services. Nevertheless, for the sake of transparency, clarity and reliability, thoroughly well-founded, professional programmes are required. This is of equally great significance for those seeking guidance as it is for sponsors and financiers.

## THE OBJECTIVES OF GUIDANCE

**4. Activation rather than diagnosis.** Educational counselling and vocational guidance aimed at individuals seeking guidance should not be reduced to skills diagnosis functions. If it settles for being this, not only will it miss development potential for those seeking guidance; it will seem totally opposed to the actual target of motivating and activating educational guidance.

**5. Independence as a requirement.** Guidance services that relate to education or career decisions and are supported by the public, for which the public is responsible and/or which are publicly financed must fully meet the requirement of independence and/or neutrality in respect of education providers and programmes. In this regard, the guidance provider must provide evidence of the business model selected for the guidance service. Properly understood independence should not be considered as a lack of a point of view and in no way means that the interests of those seeking guidance are not supported vis-à-vis third parties.

**6. Non-discriminatory and strength-orientated.** In its concept and characteristics, guidance should always be careful to avoid stigmatisation or discrimination. It must address potential disadvantages due to ethnic background, gender, religion or ideology, disability, age or sexual identity, and the prevention of any discrimination must be actively aimed for at the individual and entity level. Also closely concerned with this is the fact that guidance should not be intended to be deficit-orientated, but should draw on the resources available to the individual seeking guidance and act supportively in their further development. Existing ethnic standards can provide guidance officers with orientation in this regard (see IAEVG – International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance).

## SUCCESS FACTORES

**7. Establishing sustainable structures.** Long-term planning and hence sustainable development of guidance programmes are necessary in order to meet these far-reaching requirements. This is necessary for at least two key reasons: firstly, in respect of visibility and reliability for guidance seekers; and secondly, with regard to establishing an attractive and sustainable employment situation for professional guidance officers.

**8. Facts-based, rather than perpetuating social patterns.** The development and professional implementation of well-founded guidance services need to be embedded in guidance science, teaching/learning research, labour market and career research, plus other reference disciplines with ongoing dialogue with these. However, at the same time it also needs structured dialogue within the career practice community of guidance officers, enabling the continuing professional development of guidance programmes and services.

**9. Strengthening guidance officers as key actors.** As with all personal services, the aspect most critical for the success of guidance processes lies in the guidance officers' motivation and ability to act professionally, and in the actual conditions of guidance processes (duration, physical location, task clarification, structural sustainability, etc). Comprehensive qualification and the continued subject-related and personal development of the guidance personnel are other major requirements needing clear, attractive framework conditions.

**10. Quality development and assurance.** The numerous development requirements at the political, institutional, programme and qualification levels require constant monitoring and ongoing activity. Quality management instruments and external quality assurance can be of use in this regard. Cross-institutional and widely-accepted criteria for successful guidance practice and independent assessment of the achievement of targets should be systematically established, with full consideration given to existing ethical and professional standards.



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