



# Note on lifelong guidance and the COVID-19 pandemic: Responses from Cedefop's CareersNet

28/04/2020

Please cite as: Cedefop (2020). *Note on lifelong guidance and the COVID-19 pandemic: Responses from Cedefop's CareersNet.*





## Outline

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*Cedefop wishes to thank the 20 CareersNet members who took their valuable time to contribute written inputs and careful feedback on this note, particularly given the difficulties during this unprecedented time.*



## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Cedefop's CareersNet experts sparked a discussion on how lifelong guidance systems in Europe and internationally, are coping in the face of the Coronavirus pandemic, especially when governments and key stakeholders, as well as guidance professionals and services, have been struggling to manage the growing crisis itself.

Despite the turmoil that is felt across the education & training and employment sectors, which has an obvious impact on the delivery of guidance services and careers learning, **lifelong guidance as a support service and a lifelong learning process, is more important than ever.** The social and economic transitions of young people and adults in and out of the labour market require financial and non-financial supports, such as career guidance, to assist individuals in navigating very difficult labour market circumstances that are unfolding and will likely remain for some time.

Lifelong guidance (LLG) is a multi-sector policy field as guidance services and provisions, including policies and programmes relating to education, training, employment and social inclusion. This is delivered in diverse settings according to a lifelong (and life-wide) learning approach.

Lifelong guidance is officially defined by a European Council Resolution of 2008 as a continuous process that enables citizens at any age and situation 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 (Council of the European Union, 2008). It includes activities relating to information-giving, counselling, competence assessment, support in work and learning environments, as well as the teaching of decision-making and career management skills. It can be provided in schools, by training providers, at job centres, workplaces/enterprises, community centres or in other settings. Guidance services can provide referrals to other services and specialists.

Cedefop decided to conduct an initial consultation so that CareersNet experts could share their knowledge and insights on lifelong guidance in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. From the responses received from the experts we could arrive at a preliminary understanding as to:

- the main issues lifelong guidance systems, as well as professionals, have been facing;
- how lifelong guidance will or can adapt to improve support to all individuals, considering the present interruptions in face-to-face services, and the leap into digitalisation of guidance delivery, with all its implications.

CareersNet<sup>2</sup> is Cedefop's network of independent experts in lifelong guidance and career development, established in 2017. The members of CareersNet are individuals with recognised expertise in the area of lifelong guidance and career development. They are selected based on a call for experts, subject to an evaluation process. Members do not represent any particular country, nor any institution. CareersNet is primarily a research-based policy forum. The network provides an opportunity to produce insights on career development activities embedded in distinct policy fields, such as education, youth policies, training, validation of non-formal and informal learning, adult learning or labour market policy. Besides its ongoing thematic research activities in lifelong guidance, Cedefop has established CareersNet to monitor policy developments and innovative practices in EU

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<sup>1</sup> The publication has neither been edited nor proofread by Cedefop's editing service.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/networks/careersnet>



countries, as well as in some EEA, EFTA, EU accession countries, which enriches network knowledge production. CareersNet experts are main contributors responsible for Cedefop's EU+ Inventory on lifelong guidance systems and practices<sup>3</sup>, which is also a tool for monitoring progress on the European guidelines on lifelong guidance (ELGPN, 2015).

### Approach to information gathering

This note is based on a selection of information from those CareersNet experts who responded to the invitation to provide their inputs and independent insights (see Annex 1 for a list of countries and names of CareersNet experts) collected through an email consultation. The majority of CareersNet members contributed inputs for development of content (20 out of 31 in total). The material collected was reviewed and briefly analysed by Cedefop staff responsible for CareersNet and the Guidance project area, under Antonio Ranieri, Department of Learning and Employability.

Experts were invited to make a brief, initial assessment of the current situation concerning the impact the pandemic/health emergency and lockdown, or other restrictions are having on the delivery of lifelong guidance in their country/region/local area. This was intended to capture their impressions, using selected and provisional information and data within their reach, within a short timeframe of one week (April 8 to April 16). Contributing CareersNet experts were given an opportunity to review the final draft note before publication.

In some cases, CareersNet experts were able to conduct short interviews or have e-mail exchanges with other guidance experts, their colleagues, guidance practitioners and national stakeholders specialised in education and/or employment and/or sectors. Despite this, the information presented below should be considered as provisional as not all details have been confirmed as this would take additional time. In this way, this note may contain errors and omissions. Due to turmoil caused by the crisis and the multi-sectoral nature of lifelong guidance delivery in national systems, it would be impossible for single experts to collect comprehensive information on all guidance provisions or improvised practices on a national scale, in a such a short time span. In this way, experts were asked to report on information readily at hand and according to what is most accessible to them in their area of guidance expertise.

Two guiding questions were posed eliciting: CareersNet experts' initial assessment on how lifelong guidance systems are coping in the face of the pandemic; and, second, their reflections and any tentative recommendations based on their observations, contacts/sources and understanding of how the countries are managing the crisis.

The note is divided into four parts. The following section presents the main messages that come across from our reading of the expert responses. The next section contains a short summary of responses, selected and edited by Cedefop. These are organised by theme and main sector. All the material was used to develop the main messages and themes but the illustrations in the short summary do not necessarily include all information received. The last two sections include reflections and recommendations from the experts. Country names are inserted beside content linked to a specific context. In some cases, we have left the excerpt, to the extent possible, as it was received.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices>



## Main messages

- The situation for reporting on guidance support in many countries was described as **unstable** in terms of system functioning and delivery in many settings. **Many experts found it difficult to make a reliable assessment of the situation** in a context of exceptional uncertainty, which is especially true in more complex or decentralised systems. Governments were busy with **immediate priority health and safety concerns**. Websites with guidelines and information on guidance support services across different sectors and policy areas are being updated continuously.
- **The importance of lifelong guidance is clearer than ever** for younger students and for adults of all ages. Guidance can support **employment transitions** with predicted shifts in the labour market and with extreme increases in unemployment, upskilling and reskilling needs. During this time, guidance is also well positioned to **support individual wellbeing**, providing emotional support, counselling and case management for individuals with multiple needs. Guidance practitioners are also able to make referrals to psychosocial counselling services for that people in difficulty. At this time, particular attention is paid to reaching out to **vulnerable groups**, young people, students and adults at risk of further social exclusion, to empower them. Some experts have noted that there will be renewed emphasis on **career management skills**, as well as other skills, **and the fostering of key individual qualities such as resilience and adaptability**.
- In what many guidance experts describe as the great leap to online learning and guidance delivery, digital technologies and the role of ICT in lifelong guidance are a common focus or concern. Themes include:
  - present and future modes of delivery;
  - barriers in accessing online support and multichannel delivery for all;
  - teaching and careers learning/guidance education in school-based programmes;
  - labour market intelligence (LMI);
  - need for widespread and universal upskilling and training (for practitioners, learners, beneficiaries, caregivers, jobseekers and employees, etc.);
  - outreach measures;
  - information and guidelines related to use of digital technology;
  - IT security and personal data protection and ethical themes.
- The lockdown appears to have triggered the use of **web-based interactive guidance tools and services** (e.g. video-communication with counsellors, YouTube-live or webinars with chat function, and facilitation), even in countries where these technologies were not previously common in guidance delivery. On the other hand, the **telephone** appears to feature as a practical tool for one-to-one communication, despite the other channels available. In some cases, the telephone is preferred for making personal contact with students, such as to support those at risk of early school leaving from education and training (ELET).
- There are indications that the **extent of ICT infrastructure** and level of **lifelong guidance system development** have had a strong influence on how (and if) guidance services and careers learning have been delivered, and the nature of those services, during the crisis



period; these aspects also appear to be shaping the development of further policies and plans, and other steering tools.

- With the lack of face-to-face contact support and sudden move to near **exclusive use of digital technologies in guidance**, the interrelated issues of **access and quality** came to the fore. These are themes that are not new to guidance experts nor to governments, but the crisis shed new light on the most critical problems. Governments and guidance experts have started to discuss which are the main barriers to access that students and adult beneficiaries have faced during the crisis. This was linked to practitioner training suited to wholly ICT-based delivery methods, so that teachers and counsellors are able to reach all users. Flexibility toward multi-method and channel delivery also requires training and experience.
- **Guidance professionals have been under pressure to adapt to the sudden change** to providing guidance and support at a distance, including using multichannel digital technologies, without contact support and face-to-face teaching. **Mindsets of practitioners** appear to be changing, for now, to rapidly fit into a new way of working, and, likewise, at organisational level, systems were implemented to ensure continuity of service.
- **Participation in online further training among guidance practitioners appears to be on the increase** during the crisis. Where these courses are made available, practitioners seem to seize the opportunity to upskill. Participation in specific types of training are mentioned that are associated with the shift to online support and the need for digital skills relevant to guidance delivery, such as use of video-calling or one-to-one chat facility. Increases in participation in general courses designed to increase other types of practitioner knowledge and competencies are also observed. Where online practitioner training is not available/less accessible, there are **calls for further training opportunities and more information online, targeted to practitioners**.
- There is some indication of an intensification of **stakeholder collaboration, cooperation among guidance professionals** and with public, private and community actors, including new ones in some countries, such as healthcare workers and suppliers of digital services and statistics. These themes were also raised in the absence of active cooperation and effective communication during the crisis, so that all actors in guidance are better prepared.
- There appear to be **differences in the education & training and employment sectors**, in how the pandemic and ensuring government precautionary measures such as school and office closures, have had an impact on lifelong guidance service delivery and careers learning. There is, of course, a general **disruption of guidance delivery and activities requiring physical face-to-face contact** (including individual guidance appointments, group visits to career centres, workplace visits and work experience school programmes, group counselling in schools, universities or for unemployed or mass events such job fairs).
- Concerning guidance delivery in the employment sector and settings during the crisis, in many countries **guidance counsellors and practitioners in public employment settings (PES) are being redeployed** as current priorities have shifted away from usual career services to processing new unemployment claims.
- Multiple **web portals of guidance providers are being adapted** for the dissemination of guidance-related information, self-help tools and resources and advice targeted to specific



user groups and more generally. This has been an immediate strategy and has entailed supplementing or commenting on existing information or new resources created during this crisis.

- The experts report that in response to the crisis some countries have **changed plans for launching guidance initiatives, scheduled strategies and similar policy measures that include guidance**, sometimes ahead of schedule or they are delayed in response to the crisis. New or adapted guidelines have also been produced and disseminated.

## Summary of responses from CareersNet experts<sup>4</sup>

The information received needs to be contextualised in the short timeframe that the resulting measures of confinement and social distancing have been in place. In this way, the situation is still evolving and unstable, with measures affecting career guidance in different ways, as systems, practitioners and delivery adapt, adjust and react. COVID-19 restrictions applied to guidance professionals and face-to-face provision of counselling or other services, which appears to have interrupted contact services in respondent countries, in most cases since the first half of March. Across Europe, schools closed down and moved to online, virtual provision of education, which has forced guidance practitioners to come up with ways to adjust their teaching (counselling, communication, etc.) methods. Similarly, for guidance provision in employment sector settings, the use of distance delivery modes is also becoming more prevalent overall, or delivery is reportedly being improved or modified.

Personalised forms of guidance comprise various forms and settings reaching from mass events to face-to-face counselling:

1. Mass events, e.g. VET and higher education fairs where students can get up-to-date information and replies to their questions at various stands; job fairs or speed dating where jobseekers can meet employers
2. Group events, e.g. classroom lessons and meetings with career guidance teachers, career guidance counsellors, group visits to careers information or guidance centres or companies; group counselling sessions with guidance counsellors to deal with questions on a certain educational pathway or field; online group chats or forums
3. Individual appointments and activities, e.g. in-depth physical or virtual career guidance or coaching; work placements as part of careers education.

Depending on the starting point of a given country, the needs and capacities for adjustment during the lockdown and the exit period strongly vary.

### Leap to dependence on digital technologies and multichannel delivery

After an initial shock and discontinuance of activity, countries have necessarily built on existing tools and infrastructures, rapidly adapting their services to the new circumstances. Countries in which digital forms of guidance provision are established, as well as countries that have existing multichannel capacity (different channels to provide guidance: phone, on-line services, face-to-face) seem to have

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<sup>4</sup> The following section has been compiled using edited versions of the inputs from the participating experts.



been faster and more effective in transitioning to the new reality where all support services and careers learning are provided remotely.

Estonia has been providing career services online (via telephone, e-mail and Skype) for several years as an alternative to person-to-person meetings, so maintaining a certain level of provision was less of a challenge (Holland and Mann, 2020). In France continuity in most of the services has been ensured, as digital infrastructure and provision of support using digital technology was already utilised.

The lockdown appears to have triggered the use of web-based interactive guidance tools and services (e.g. video-communication with counsellors, YouTube-live or webinars including a chat function and facilitation) in countries where this was previously not common, such as in Germany.

The particular value of online platforms during the time of the Coronavirus pandemic and longer periods of lockdown is becoming apparent, even if their use has not yet been fully evaluated in the context of the pandemic. They appear to present an element of continuity, in theory, accessible for all who have the necessary technical equipment at home. Depending on their scope, these platforms can include a relatively comprehensive offer for a structured process of information and decision-making for identifying optimal choices for education and training and job searches nationally and/or across Europe, or within adult learning. According to the information collected, key ingredients include general information on learning opportunities and job vacancies, trends in labour and skills demand, information including videos or podcasts on occupations. Some web-platforms offer personalised tools, for example, the option to enter a personal skills and qualifications profile, self-exploration tools and tests matching interests with fields of education, training or occupations or competence-based matching of jobseeker profiles with jobs.

With the temporary discontinuation of face-to-face and other guidance services, existing webpages have been the first and most obvious response to reach the public, mainly as vehicles of information provision and dissemination of example practices and to provide support for careers-related teaching and learning. Webpages have been updated and enhanced with targeted information for user groups, both for those who wish to benefit from guidance and for career guidance professionals and practitioners. Websites have also been used to host digital self-help services and information on further training of practitioners, both short-term or modular, and full degree programmes for upskilling, but also to inform guidance counsellors of offers for their beneficiaries/users. Web portals are also used for information on labour market intelligence.

While the use of online platforms and tools ensures a basic offer of career guidance even during the lockdown, many individuals need more in-depth and intense guidance support to define their choices and next steps, depending on stage of the process of transition and orientation, and their personal situation and context. Having looked at comprehensive information may create the need for support in structuring and prioritizing; having completed an interest test may yield new questions about next steps. Vulnerable groups who are confronted with their complex personal and social needs may need additional support found in social work approaches.

To cope with increasing demand, many countries have increased their offer in telephone or online-guidance and video chats as far as line capacities, other technical infrastructure and staff capacities allow. Telephone communication in Germany, for example, was suggested as useful for supporting students during the transitions to assisted preparatory courses for VET, choice of VET or another educational pathway. In Finland, school guidance counsellors, in communication with professional



colleagues, have reminded each other that the telephone is also a legitimate means for contacting students even if other internet-based options, are available. In England, the National Careers Service area-based contractors have now been allocated a new responsibility for delivering the National careers helpline to young people, to complement their existing work with adults.

**Box 1: From classroom to telephone guidance: transitions coaches for pupils at risk of dropout in Germany**

To reduce early school leaving from education and training including dropout from VET (apprenticeships), Germany offers a special form of support for disadvantaged young people. The so-called “transition coaching” supports students at school in acquiring general secondary education or to complete (assisted) VET or another form of upper-secondary education. Currently, around 5,000 coaches work at 3,000 schools. At general secondary schools, the transition coaches (mostly social pedagogues) hold regular meetings and appointments with final class students at risk of dropout or having difficulties managing the transition. In cooperation with the individual student, the coach prepares a transition plan. This programme is managed by PES Germany and co-funded by the European Social Fund.

To ensure continuity of tailored support during the Corona pandemic, the transition coaches have adjusted their services, steering young people as much as possible towards individual guidance services by phone.

Source: CareersNet expert Germany

In addition, several countries have put in place call centres or hotlines, often located on the sites of guidance providers. Users are directed to these points of access. These call services appear to provide a variety of support, including information, advice and guidance. In Greece, a special Covid 19 Psychosocial 24-hour Support phone line (10306) has been established by the Ministry of Health and the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (EKPA). The telephone support service is organized under the scientific guidance and supervision of the First Psychiatric Clinic of the Medical School of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (EKPA), supported by the Federation of psychosocial rehabilitation and mental health Institutions "ARGO", with more than 160 specialists from 40 organizations, the National centre for social solidarity (EKKA), the non-profit association “Smile of the child”, as well as a large number of volunteer psychologists.

In Switzerland several cantons have provided new telephone hotlines and in Germany, the Federal Employment Agency also offers hotlines; the Ministry of Education has a “information phone” for further training. It direct users to information on appropriate further training. In Malta, the Ministry for Education and Employment has set up a helpline number whereby students and parents at primary, secondary and post-secondary levels can call and speak to various practitioners, including career advisors who were asked to volunteer for this service. In addition, the University of Malta also created one helpline for University students. The National Agency for Employment (ANOFM) in Romania initiated a call centre to inform individuals about technical unemployment conditions.

Turkey has established a Special education and guidance call centre to support students, youth and parents in 81 provinces. It aims at providing help, counselling, psychological and social support to residents by phone.



The impossibility of carrying out face-to-face counselling has led to an increase in the diversification of channels to communicate with users. In some of the countries, this multichannel communication already existed, but some of the channels might be further utilised in the current crisis. As reported by Germany: “as an interviewee put it, the lockdown has positive side effects triggering the use of interactive online tools. It did not only considerably widen the use of applications for online staff and other meetings, but also pushed the ongoing development of new online communication formats”. Video conferencing (using Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Skype) is along with the telephone, probably the most-used channel to connect with clients in the new situation (reported as available in CH, DE, DK, EE, EL, FI, FR, HU, IE, UT, MT, RO, TR, Wales and England). Although there will be different degrees of readiness for all these provisions, it seems that video conferencing is more prominent in education and training than in the employment sector. Usage of email for communication with practitioners is also quite common both in education and in employment settings. However, the use of video channels, such as YouTube or social media (Facebook) for interaction seems more prominent in the education sector than in employment. Telephone support seems to be provided in many countries (CH, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IT, MT, RO, England, Scotland, wales, North Ireland) also.

What seems clear is that the lockdown has triggered a shift to multichannel delivery of guidance and information. Despite an overall push for digitalization, there are limitations on a continued offer of guidance provision tailored to individual needs, given the constraints of more comprehensive short-term adjustment. It is easier for those countries having well-established formats for online guidance and interactive webinars or other tools, while other countries will need time and resources to establish telephone, e-mail and virtual guidance for all who need it.

The lockdown, therefore, points to an increased risk that those who greatly need tailored guidance and support will suffer the most from adverse consequences of the lockdown, thus deepening social inequality. Again, experiences in the countries during the crisis period needs investigation, also in terms of the potential for tailored support using digital technologies. Even if online services and education have been expanded, access to WIFI, particularly in rural areas, may be a barrier to accessing these provisions.

### Collaboration and networking

The expert’s responses demonstrate that there are many individual practitioners who aim to find solutions to provide support to students, despite the conditions. The crisis seems to be creating an environment for collaboration among professionals and for new actors to get involved in the provision of guidance.

In France, for example, guidance professionals have organised themselves in a way that they can continue their mission. Several professional networks, groups and communities, have offered support and information to guidance practitioners. Across the UK, Careers England and the Career Development Institute (CDI) have launched a major survey to capture career companies and practitioners’ recent impacts with a call of recommendations to governments in a post Covid-19 landscape.

In Cyprus, counsellors are contacting students through the Ministry of Education’s approved web page. They are posting specific articles and advice on the Facebook web page ‘Guidance in Cyprus’<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Εν Κύπρω Συν-Βουλευτική: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2907556365957500/>



Various articles and programmes are also appearing on web pages<sup>6</sup>. Also in France, guidance professionals have put several web pages together for parents to accompany them during periods of confinement. For example, *Troubles psychiques et confinement* (Psychological disorders and confinement)<sup>7</sup>, a *guide des parents confinés* (Guide for Confined Parents)<sup>8</sup>, *Stop blues détente* (Stop blues relaxation)<sup>9</sup>, *Sports*<sup>10</sup>, *Faire du sport à la maison en ligne* (Playing sports at home online)<sup>11</sup>. Guidance professionals are already organised as a network within secondary schools. They work in a complementary way with teachers in charge of classes in order to keep information on guidance procedures up to date and to support and accompany the guidance of pupils who are in a problematic situation. Continuity has been established with the teachers through telephone interviews and e-mails. This also seems to be the case in Romania, where the teaching staff of the educational unit collaborates with the school counsellors and speech therapists.

In Finland, career practitioners are actively sharing their expertise in working at a distance using their internal communication channels. The companies who are developing online learning solutions have united their forces to give free access to their materials (including career education) and help the teachers discover how new educational tools can be used or how to complement their traditional way of working. In Serbia, some additional local initiatives from different NGOs appeared in this period, dedicated to online counselling.

On the Internet, in social media groups, there are lively discussions about the effect of the pandemic on the education system in Hungary. One group with more than 4,000 members, has been following the developments closely. Users concluded that current situation is not a distance education nor a Learning Management System-based education but one that is ad hoc, mostly improvised and based on individual teacher solutions. It is best described as an emergency digital schooling solution and hence, guidance must follow a similar approach.

In Serbia, many resources, mostly initiatives of individual coaches or guidance practitioners were published online to help employees organize their work process, but also to provide support in managing multiple roles in these changed circumstances. Furthermore, several digital resources are now possible to access free of charge to end users, to overcome the difficulties in these times, and although most of these resources are not guidance-related there are some instructional and educational materials, platforms that guidance practitioners can use in this period, as well as guidance services. These resources are collected in the Digital Solidarity portal<sup>12</sup>.

In Malta, Jobsplus has been working with the help of a service provider on the development of a new online registration system to facilitate the registration and profile generation for both jobseekers and the employment advisors. The first phase of this system has already been deployed with significant work already being carried out on a second phase which will enhance the system further.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.eschoolcounselor.com/?fbclid=IwAR02McG27NbY-gDxgjigfVquvVKhiN2JG7SQ8dPckMk-fykaNhLRmh6HGas>

<sup>7</sup> [www.pedopsydebre.org/fiches-pratiques/categories/g%C3%A9n%C3%A9ralit%C3%A9s](http://www.pedopsydebre.org/fiches-pratiques/categories/g%C3%A9n%C3%A9ralit%C3%A9s)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.egalite-femmes-hommes.gouv.fr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Guide-des-parents-confinés-50-astuces-de-pro.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.stopblues.fr/fr/detente/covid-19>

<sup>10</sup> <https://padlet.com/clgboisfleuri/ro5eb2nk3c01>

<sup>11</sup> <http://sports.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/appsportliste-2.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.digitalnasolidarnost.gov.rs/>, managed by the government



Education advisers in Wales are in the process of reviewing their parent strategy as they want to increase engagement with parents. Within this strategy, parent engagement will likely begin at an earlier stage – starting with parents of year 6 pupils. This includes advisors attending years 7 and 8 parent evenings. The intention is for parents to influence their children’s decisions by equipping them with LMI and other relevant information. Advisors have met colleagues from Gatsby England to discuss how to collaborate in terms of parent engagement. Particular interest is focused on those parents who may not be proactive in engaging with schools/careers.

As part of the Welsh response to Covid-19, parents are kept in touch with by phone and targeted on Careers Wales social media channels. They have conducted the first live Q&A with parents and hope to deliver more in response to the demand for information and support from parents.

To enrich distance learning, the Ministry of National Education and Youth in France launched the “Nation Apprenante” operation, in partnership with public audiovisual players, France Télévisions, Radio France, Arte<sup>13</sup>, whose aim is to offer quality content in the national and regional media directly linked to school curricula.

The Malta Career Guidance Association which is a voluntary organisation that represents career guidance practitioners is extending its services to the community where its volunteers can answer any questions through e-mail, chat or online calls. The service includes guidance related to choice of subjects, career-related queries, employability skills, course information and adult participation in lifelong learning<sup>14</sup>. This service was promoted on the Association’s Facebook page and website and was shared by various members. In addition, the Association has updated its website and included a dedicated area related to COVID-19 queries in terms of employment and education. The page consolidates information issued from various government entities such as those in education, government assistance and job searching services<sup>15</sup>.

Some private companies in Hungary have been trying to fill in the gaps in online service delivery. Most of the private companies have been offering distance guidance services for adults, via Skype or other platforms, but these are also available at NGOs as well as for-profit firms. Most of these providers set up their professional protocols for on-line services.

In Scotland, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) has introduced new services such as the My World of Work Job Hub<sup>16</sup>, which enables employers across Scotland to quickly advertise immediate vacancies, and to support individuals seeking employment at this critical time. The service is also providing PACE redundancy support for employers, employees and apprentices, both online<sup>17</sup> and through a dedicated support helpline (0800 917 8000).

In Germany, the German Association of Career Counsellors as well as the National Guidance Forum support the numerous self-employed guidance counsellors through information on new financial support programmes for self-employed.

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<sup>13</sup> [www.education.gouv.fr/operation-nation-apprenante-303174](http://www.education.gouv.fr/operation-nation-apprenante-303174)

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/mcgamalta/photos/rpp.561304383999243/2555525324577129/?type=3&theater>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.mcga.org.mt/covid-19>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/has-your-job-been-affected-covid-19-coronavirus>

<sup>17</sup> [www.redundancyscotland.co.uk](http://www.redundancyscotland.co.uk)



The National Guidance Forum sent an open letter addressed to the German government, calling for the latter to take account of the particular situation of this group of counsellors.

Counsellors in Denmark are informed about available resources on a central webpage operated by the Ministry of Children and Education<sup>18</sup>. There is an internal page for practitioners that has links and information on new legislation, focused on options for the unemployed and employed and those who have recently lost their jobs or were laid off. These regulations are often changed, and it is vital for counsellors to have this information as a quick overview to find the correct help to provide for union members and others in need of support.

### Practitioner training

According to experts in several countries, mindsets of some practitioners who were not accustomed to working with digital technologies needed to change, to rapidly fit into a new way of working, and, likewise, at organisational level, systems were implemented to ensure continuity of service. The crisis has exposed the need for training of practitioners as the Maltese expert indicated. The Bulgarian expert, similarly, stated: “In a short-term perspective, guidance practices would need to focus on psychological support of persons losing their jobs. Taking into consideration that not all career counsellors have a psychology background there is an emergent need of training counsellors how to provide basic psychological support and/or partner with professional psychologists to address this need of their clients”. The digital gap among practitioners in Italy, in many regions, implies that there is the need to train most of the PES practitioners in order to provide career guidance services remotely.

The crisis has provided a chance to clarify the range of guidance services, and, also, aspects of career learning that are part of guidance. For example, in guidance, the one-to-one provision which supports the individual to consider their own circumstances and make decisions, can be delivered online via video-call or “chat” facility, but practitioner competence is seen as key. While training was available in Ireland for guidance practitioners in FET in recent years, this was not a required competence for school-based guidance counsellors. In response to the requirements for school delivery through remote or online provision, school-based guidance counsellors are actively seeking upskilling opportunities to provide online guidance provision.

National agencies in Sweden also offer general online resources and training for guidance counsellors. Some of these courses existed prior to the crisis but are seeing registration in courses increase. For example, Euroguidance Sweden at UHR is providing a second online course in ‘mobility guidance’ for study counsellors at higher education institutions who want to learn more about how to provide support in international mobility. The interest for the course is very high; it appears that guidance professionals are making use of these exceptional times to engage in further training<sup>19</sup>. Euroguidance in Sweden is planning to use this format to offer training in other areas.

Similarly, in Germany the Federal Employment Agency is developing an update of the competence profile for career guidance counsellors and on this basis, an introductory training for the new online tools. Given the rise of using online communication, a number of other guidance stakeholders equally offer training in online counselling and use of online tools:

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<sup>18</sup> [www.voksenuddannelse.dk](http://www.voksenuddannelse.dk)

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.uhr.se/syv/infor-en-utlandsvistelse/aktuellt-inom-det-internationella-vagledningsomradet/anmalan-till-forsommarens-kurs-i-ivagledning-oppen>



- The German Association for Career Guidance Training (dvh) is launching a number of training opportunities (e.g. digital tools – pros and cons; data protection; video presentations and online surveys; new skills requirements for career guidance counsellors). The training will combine webinars and individual coaching.
- The National Guidance Forum Germany presents a training manual on specifics of telephone and online guidance elaborated for the Regional Qualification Centres. Further, it includes guidelines for crisis counselling in the context of the Corona crisis.

## Guidance in education and training

### Moving to distance learning – guidance follows

As schools move to distance learning provision, so does guidance in education and training. The availability of ICT infrastructure, previous use of ICT, as well as the attitude of the guidance practitioners and clients towards digital forms of delivery plays a major role. For all countries who closed their schools, this meant that guidance could only be provided using digital technologies and other tools and channels that can be used for communication at a distance. Only Finland reports that in exceptional cases, some contact support can be provided for students with a special support decision.

The subject of vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups was often raised by CareersNet experts, such as in strategies to reach clients, the digital divide and other access related topics. These issues intersect and are embedded in different aspects of the move to distance learning. They were brought to the surface during the crisis. In Denmark, for example, many career professionals at educational institutions experience that the most vulnerable students with the highest need for support are very difficult to reach and support online or on the phone.

All comprehensive schools in Sweden have remained open so far during the crisis, so here, pupils may have contact with their guidance counsellors. Institutions providing upper secondary, municipal adult education, vocational colleges, higher education are closed and offer careers services remotely. However, there is currently a lack of information on knowledge about how the work situation of guidance counsellors in Swedish schools is affected by the crisis. Lärarnas Riksförbund (The National Union of Teachers) is running a survey to get a better picture. They want to provide the government with a guidance perspective on how the corona crisis is being handled and what measures that may be needed in the long term.

A week after the schools closed in Turkey, with the digital platforms of the Ministry of National Education distance learning started in K-12 and tertiary education.

The resilience and commitment of guidance practitioners as well as teachers, seems to play a major role in responding quickly to the crisis. While a few governments reportedly provide guidelines and have established systems for education provided remotely, others had more of a challenge to implement and adapt their programmes without much notice; teachers and practitioners had to improvise and use different methods, even without prior training in using some or all digital technologies.

In Finland, the expert reported that schools are generally well prepared to organise opportunities for distance learning. Most of the schools are already using well-established online communication platforms between homes and schools. Students have access to online learning environments to



obtain information and upload their assignments. The schools have local teachers specialised in the use of technology and function as peer mentors, who also assist their colleagues in navigating the online platforms.

Similarly, concerning guidance for young adults and students, guidance infra-structure and professionals in France seem to have been responsive in maintaining contact with the public and continuing to meet the information and interview needs of young people, students and families. The adjustment of professionals to working at home was also described as easy to achieve thanks to the existing digital infrastructure and the use of telephone. State-dependent operators are reported to have reacted quickly by creating digital tools (e.g., virtual classrooms, teaching aids) and useful resources for guidance (information on training courses, jobs, quizzes, etc.), available free of charge to education and guidance professionals.

Although not specific to guidance and career development, schools in Malta have also reacted to the situation with measures taken by educators and school administrations in order to ensure that their students continue to follow the curricula. The most popular platforms used by educators are Zoom and Microsoft Teams whereby educators are conducting live online lessons. Other applications such as ClassDojo are being used in order to facilitate communication between students, parents and teachers where the family and the classroom are brought together through instant sharing of educational material.

Careers Wales has shared web content with every school and asked them to upload it onto their school websites. The content gives information about the support Careers Wales can offer and how to get in touch with their adviser. They have also launched a dedicated Live chat for school pupils and their parents on the Careers Wales website. Careers advisers have been in touch with many year 11 pupils during the first two weeks of lockdown. They are continuing to do this by phoning, texting, and emailing. Schools have been allowing advisers to use their school platforms to share information with young people and their parents.

'In Malta, services were reportedly quick in adapting from the previous face-to-face interactions to new forms of delivery including phone guidance, e-mails and online profile generation.'. In primary, secondary and post-secondary, for the guidance service offered at educational level, the Ministry for Education and Employment has set up a helpline number whereby students and parents can speak to various practitioners. Besides personal issues, students are also provided with support concerning: curricular difficulties, study difficulties, queries related to choice of subjects, changes in the post-secondary course requirements due to COVID-19, queries related to exams, concerns related to transition to post-secondary education, etc. This service was set up two weeks after the schools closed; it involves having calls redirected to practitioners' personal phones. Given the changes related to examinations, assessments and the affected curricula, the Ministry also published a list of frequently asked questions from students on its social media platform, which usually would be referred to guidance. Most of the schools, VET providers, further and higher education institutions are offering all services through video conferencing, in one-on-one sessions or in groups, or through email and phone.

Face-to-face counselling was discontinued in some cantons in Switzerland, while it was still possible in others at the beginning of the pandemic. By 17 March at the latest, all cantonal vocational and career counselling organisations switched to distance counselling and information. In 2019, the Swiss



Conference of Heads of Cantonal Vocational and Academic Guidance (KBSB), the only national body for vocational and career guidance, had commissioned a study on the digitisation of vocational and career guidance. Some cantons had carried out pilot projects during 2019 to implement distance and blended counselling services, that at the time were met with relatively little demand. Nevertheless, these experiences provided some basic principles that were helpful in the transition to telematic delivery. At the cantonal level, there was a complete abandonment of face-to-face consultations, closure of information centres, cancellation of all information events and courses, and a move to various forms of distance guidance (telephone, chat, video counselling) in all cantons.

In Ireland, the Adult educational guidance services, (AEGS) provided by the 16 regional Education and training boards<sup>20</sup>, offer careers and education information, group and 1-1 guidance counselling. These AEGS provided information at regional level via various methods, now adapting their practices to ensure that more up-to-date and relevant information is available through regular online bulletins and social media. Telephone guidance and email facilities ensure that all clients can access the services appropriately.

Services related to academic and professional orientation and guidance in Spain were also affected during the first three weeks. It was only after the holiday on April 13th that support actions were promoted in relation to guidance, from primary and secondary schools and vocational training to penitentiaries. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training through the National Centre for Innovation and Educational Research has published a guide with resources to ensure that pupils and students in all schooling stages are able to maintain their learning progress. This guide provides resources and strategies for teachers and designed for the crisis period of tele-education and tele-training. Regional education administrations also provide information, resources and tutorials to promote the online teaching.

In Greece, following the ministerial decision for the suspension of all school services since 11/3/2020 due to the pandemic, many Centres for educational support and counselling (KESYs) in secondary education have established telephone helplines, online request forms or teleconference services for the provision of career counselling and/or career information services, as well as psychosocial support to interested students, parents and teachers. Also, several career liaison offices operating in tertiary education institutes have introduced distance career support services using teleconference media.

Similarly, in Cyprus, guidance can be regarded as temporarily 'closed down' since the 13th March when the Government issued the official closing day of schools due to the pandemic. Attempts are being made, however, by individual counsellors employed in secondary education, to keep in contact with their students through online communication. The Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture approved a specific platform, now in active use.

It is not clear how different schools in Serbia provide career guidance, but the emphasis is still on teaching and learning regular subjects. In this way during the initial period of adaptation to the new situation, teachers deprioritized guidance, as they needed to quickly adapt to new modes of teaching their subjects, but as time passes it can be expected that more and more of them will include guidance activities in their online education as well.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.ncge.ie/ncge/aegi-contact-details>



The National Lifelong Guidance Portals (NPP1, NPP2) in Hungary have not been maintained since the end of the second project phase in 2015. The questionnaires are online and available after registration, but the school-vocational and occupational databases are not updated, therefore they cannot be used for real-time searches. A new national development that has been addressing STEM and career orientation is not ready yet. The online career surveys of the higher education information portal (FELVI) are available, but mainly without additional distance guidance services.

Following the closure of schools and further education settings due to the Covid-19 pandemic in Romania, school counsellors working at the County centres of educational resources and assistance (CERAs). are delivering remote/online counselling and guidance for students and distance psycho-pedagogical assistance services for parents/ guardians and teachers. For example, CERA of Hunedoara county offers free resources on: bullying and cyberbullying, well-being activities, stress prevention, how to spend your time at home – tips for children, etc<sup>21</sup>. CERA of Iasi county offers advice for students, parents and teachers on various topics (e.g. socio-emotional development, healthy lifestyle, school and social inclusion, effective learning, career guidance) through a helpline platform named ‘The counsellor next to you’<sup>22</sup>. The Municipal CERA from Bucharest (MPPAC) designed educational resources on the art of being resilient for all education levels (kindergarten, primary school, lower and upper secondary school)<sup>23</sup>.

#### Guidelines and government actions

A few countries have provided general guidelines to cope with the crisis.

In Ireland, and, following the announcement by the Irish Prime Minister, An Taoiseach, of the closure of schools and the delivery of teaching and learning and school supports from home, from 13th March, NCGE (National Centre for Career Guidance in Education) carried out an online survey via the NCGE communications bulletin to guidance counsellors in post-primary schools and FET settings in order to collect information on the needs of guidance counsellors. The results of both surveys informed NCGE contingency planning and strategy of supports as two key documents were published to provide support to key stakeholders. The Department of Education and Skills (DES) clarification on the continued delivery of the state-funded programme of guidance counselling supervision, for post primary school guidance counsellors, would be continued via online/remote group supervision sessions. Concurrently the Department of Education and Skills also issued Guidance on the continuity of schooling, providing general guidelines to schools on the continued provision of school teaching, learning and assessment during school closures. In this context, it was vital to ensure that, as guidance counsellors are employed as teachers within the post-primary school settings, that the legal requirements of school provision and adherence to overarching school policies was deemed as essential.

In Greece, the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs issued guidelines clarifying operation of the 71 Centres for Educational Support and Counselling (KESYs) and the organization of remote career counselling and guidance to secondary school students. KESYs in cooperation with the secondary

<sup>21</sup> <https://cjraehd.ro/%f0%9f%92%ac-utile-pentru-copii-si-parinti-%f0%9f%91%aa>

<sup>22</sup> <http://forum.cjrae-iasi.ro/index.php>

<sup>23</sup> [http://www.cmbrae.ro/2017/homepage-version-4/arta-de-a-fi-reziliant-gimnaziu/;](http://www.cmbrae.ro/2017/homepage-version-4/arta-de-a-fi-reziliant-gimnaziu/)  
[http://www.cmbrae.ro/2017/homepage-version-4/arta-de-a-fi-reziliant-liceu/;](http://www.cmbrae.ro/2017/homepage-version-4/arta-de-a-fi-reziliant-liceu/)  
[http://www.cmbrae.ro/2017/homepage-version-4/arta-de-a-fi-reziliant-prescolar/;](http://www.cmbrae.ro/2017/homepage-version-4/arta-de-a-fi-reziliant-prescolar/)  
<http://www.cmbrae.ro/2017/homepage-version-4/arta-de-a-fi-reziliant-primar/>



schools of their area of responsibility were called to proceed to the appropriate adjustment of their actions in order to implement their planning towards the implementation of targeted educational and psychosocial interventions and actions of career guidance, in accordance with the provisions of article 7 of law 4547/2018. In England, the Department for Education through the Education and Skills Funding Agency has issued new guidelines to National Careers Service area-based prime contractors which includes a recent temporary relaxation of payment-by-results only until 30th June 2020.

### Box 2: Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the Department for Economy (DfE) Minister has approved 3 specific measures to support those affected by crisis.

1. **Delivery to young people making key decisions about education, training, and employment including apprenticeships:** The Careers Service offers one-to-one advice and guidance to all year 12 pupils (final year of compulsory education in NI) throughout NI with a target of delivering to at least 95% of the cohort (22,479 pupils). All year 12 pupils are being contacted individually to ensure they are aware of the support available and encouraged to access help in these uncertain times. The Careers Service is working with the Department of Education in NI to ensure a consistent message is delivered around exam results arrangements for 2020.
2. **Advice and guidance for those furloughed, made redundant or unemployed:** The Minister for Communities who has responsibility for the Public employment service and Universal Credit, and the Minister for the Economy have agreed additional job search support for those made redundant, or unemployed, and employees on furlough. The Careers Service is offering a Job search service to support those whose jobs have been affected by the economic impact of the crisis.
3. **Improved supported access to free online training:** The Department for the Economy's Skills policy and delivery division and Careers Service has partnered with the Open University to offer a range of free training to help adults, and particularly those affected by the COVID-19 crisis to improve their skills and wellbeing. Course have been grouped to highlight skills in demand with a focus on Digital, employability and essential skills. Those who need additional support are signposted to the Career Service. The above initiatives have all been supported by a robust advertising campaign using social media and through the official citizen-facing government website, [NIDirect](#).

Source: CareersNet expert UK

Similarly, in Finland, The National Agency for Education has released a set of guidelines on distance learning and shares examples of good practices on their website. In Hungary, the National Education Authority issued a methodological recommendation on the 30th of March for the schools and teachers proposing the *Kréta* system (Chalk-system) for the management of digital learning, mainly usable as an e-diary<sup>24</sup>. However, there seems to be no actual national protocol, so different institutions, universities and professors have been following their own implementation process. Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams had become the main platform for digital learning in compulsory schooling.

In France, the state has the competence at national level for school guidance policy and is responsible for the educational and pedagogical dimension of student guidance. The support of students in the development of their career guidance project is now carried out within the framework of a dedicated timetable. In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, the official texts concern all pedagogical activities,

<sup>24</sup> <https://hungarytoday.hu/hungary-schools-digital-distance-education/>



which include guidance activities carried out by pedagogical teams and by guidance professionals (*Psy En Psychologues de l'éducation nationale/orientation*) working in schools, information and guidance centres, information and guidance services of universities. The Ministry of Education has organized and monitored the implementation of continuity of learning. All media (websites, social networks, e-mails, etc.) are used for communication at national level, relayed by the education authorities in the regions. There is ongoing updating of information throughout the crisis period. Official texts structure the organisation of the steering of the measures, the involvement of educational teams (particularly teachers), the provision of digital equipment (for online courses, the provision of resources, for communication) and the support of families and young people during this period.

### Webpages

The first line of response in the delivery of information has been update, or create new, webpages dedicated to dealing with the COVID-19 issues. Usually in form of FAQ, they provide information on changes related to examinations, assessments and the affected curricula, addressing questions that students might have and which usually would be referred to guidance.

In Romania, centralised information regarding the activity of the school counsellors from all 42 County Centres of Educational Resources and Assistance (CERAs) during the Covid-19 pandemic can be found in their websites<sup>25</sup>. By posting specialized educational content the County Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres (CPPAC) are ensuring the following services:

- remote assistance for parents/guardians and teachers regarding the evaluation of the students with special needs and career guidance for the students with special needs;
- providing information in the field of inclusive education for preschoolers/students, parents/guardians and teachers;
- offering guidance/information for parents/guardians and teachers regarding the speech therapy for pre-schoolers/pupils.

Their webpages and social media pages also contain information on:

- assistance and methodological counselling of the teaching staff;
- informing parents/guardians, teachers, children, community members about distance services and resources available, prevention and reducing the factors that cause behavioural disorders, at-risk behaviours or other difficulties, adapting students to distance education, adapting the school to the needs of students, optimizing school-student-parent relationships;
- collaboration with the teaching staff of the educational unit in which the school counsellors and speech therapists are working;
- conducting solidarity campaigns through collaboration in partnership with different organisations.

In France, the National Office for Information on Studies and Professions-Onisep continues its mission of providing information and guidance on its website<sup>26</sup>. For all young people, students and their families, in the context of Covid19, Onisep offers free access to its publications on jobs, training and guidance, in digital format<sup>27</sup>. It also provides educational teams with resources for pedagogical

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.serviciicomunitare.ro/evenimente/eveniment-14>

<sup>26</sup> [www.onisep.fr](http://www.onisep.fr)

<sup>27</sup> <https://lekiosqueenligne.onisep.fr/>



support in guidance and counselling<sup>28</sup>. Finally, Onisep counsellors answer questions from high school students, college students, students and parents on guidance, training courses and trades<sup>29</sup>, something that was already in place before the pandemic. At the regional level, throughout the country, the Onisep's regional delegations have produced resources for young people and their families<sup>30</sup>. The information and guidance centres (*centres d'information et d'orientation*, CIO) have also dedicated web pages<sup>31</sup>. The university websites inform students on how to get in touch with the guidance services<sup>32</sup>. The national site for students also has a specific information section on Covid-19<sup>33</sup>, with some information in English for international students in France<sup>34</sup>. There is also further information and local contacts on the regional CROUS sites<sup>35</sup>.

### Box 3: Online resources and systems by Ministry of Education operators at the start of the pandemic

Centre National d'Etudes à Distance (**CNED**): immediate availability to academies of online pedagogical sessions, on the dedicated CNED platform: "[Ma classe à la maison](#)"/(My class at home) which offers e-learning activities, day-long courses of activities based on school curricula, to create virtual classes led by teachers (including communications with students, document sharing).

To enrich this distance learning, the Ministry of National Education and Youth launched on 18 March this year the *Nation Apprenante operation*, in partnership with public audiovisual players, France Télévisions, [Radio France](#), [Arte](#), whose aim is to offer quality content in the national and regional media directly linked to school curricula.

Through its programme "[La Maison Lumni](#)", the France 4 channel broadcasts daily from Monday to Friday, classes given by teachers from the French National Education and Youth Departments for primary and secondary school students. All programmes broadcast on the air are also available in teletext. All of these programmes are listed on the page of the [Éduscol website dedicated to the Nation Apprenante programme](#).

To facilitate the implementation of pedagogical adaptations in the home, a set of available initiatives and pedagogical resources for teachers and families have been grouped together on Eduscol (see [web](#)).

One chapter concerns the continuity of pedagogical support for guidance, for the head teachers from the last four years of secondary schools, based on the resources produced by [Onisep](#).

Source: French CareersNet expert

In Serbia, the government-run Digital Solidarity portal<sup>36</sup> contains a series of resources that are directed to digital end-users to overcome difficulties in these times. Most of these resources are not guidance-related, but there are some instructional and educational materials, platforms that guidance practitioners can use in this period, as well as guidance services.

<sup>28</sup> <https://eduscol.education.fr/cid150849/continuite-de-l-accompagnement-pedagogique-a-l-orientation.html>

<sup>29</sup> [www.monorientationenligne.fr](http://www.monorientationenligne.fr)

<sup>30</sup> [www.onisep.fr/Pres-de-chez-vous](http://www.onisep.fr/Pres-de-chez-vous)

<sup>31</sup> [www.ac-strasbourg.fr/fileadmin/public/Orientation/GardezLeLienColle\\_\\_ge.pdf](http://www.ac-strasbourg.fr/fileadmin/public/Orientation/GardezLeLienColle__ge.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> e.g. <https://blogs.univ-tlse2.fr/scuio-ip/>

<sup>33</sup> [www.etudiant.gouv.fr/pid33626-cid150278/covid-19-%7C-faq-crous-etudes-concours-services.html](http://www.etudiant.gouv.fr/pid33626-cid150278/covid-19-%7C-faq-crous-etudes-concours-services.html)

<sup>34</sup> [www.etudiant.gouv.fr/cid150432/covid-19-%7C-faq-crous-studies-services.html](http://www.etudiant.gouv.fr/cid150432/covid-19-%7C-faq-crous-studies-services.html)

<sup>35</sup> e.g. [www.crous-strasbourg.fr/](http://www.crous-strasbourg.fr/) [www.crous-nantes.fr/](http://www.crous-nantes.fr/)

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.digitalsolidarnost.gov.rs/>



A special portal in Greece has been set up with information on social support measures targeted to students, the unemployed, employees, and entrepreneurs<sup>37</sup>. The portals developed by EOPPEP<sup>38</sup> for adolescents, students, young people and guidance practitioners working in the field of education and training, as well as the Lifelong career development portal<sup>39</sup> targeted to adults of all ages ensure access to information during the crisis period. The new online portal of the Greek State<sup>40</sup> provides access to online public sector services, including a series of certificates, services and transactions related to education, employment and entrepreneurship. The portal was initiated two months earlier than planned due to the corona virus pandemic.

In Ireland, the NCGE provided dedicated space on the website to highlight policies, practices and procedures in provision of quality guidance provision at this time<sup>41</sup>. This online space provides links to national government and departmental guidelines to promote a coordinated national approach to supports which inform guidance practice. For Guidance specifically, the NCGE and some professional organisations are providing information to support guidance practice. On Thursday 9th April, further support information was published by NCGE to support FET based guidance practice<sup>42</sup>.

Online platforms at national level in Germany have issued “Corona” information and guidance for their clients on their websites, steering visitors towards telephone and e-mail channels. At national level, this regards above all, the user-oriented web-portal of the Federal Employment Agency as main provider for vocational, educational and employment guidance in the country. The portal offers comprehensive information for young persons structured along a customer’s journey in the process of orientation<sup>43</sup>. Users can create an individual portfolio, present their competences and match these with vocational education and training paths or study courses based upon their strengths in terms of skills and competences.

### Guidance in employment sector settings

The situation concerning guidance in the employment sector, for young adults, employed or unemployed individuals presents similar features as the responses to education and training guidance. However, as countries prioritise passive labour market measures, such as minimum wages or unemployment payments, in several countries, due to the huge demand, many of the public employment service employees were redeployed to payments or were otherwise occupied with assisting applicants.

The Ministry of Welfare, Labour and Social Insurance, a provider of guidance in Cyprus, is not able at the moment to provide any additional guidance, due to the increased work related to the different measures put in place to serve the workers who are forced to stay at home without pay from their employers whose businesses were closed down. The web page of the Ministry<sup>44</sup> shows the large

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<sup>37</sup> <https://covid19.gov.gr/>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.eoppep.gr/teens/>

<sup>39</sup> <http://e-stadiodromia.eoppep.gr/>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.gov.gr/>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.ncge.ie/covid-19/support>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.ncge.ie/covid-19/support/post-primary/resources/support/doc/des;>  
<https://www.ncge.ie/covid-19/support/post-primary/resources/slideshow;> [https://www.ncge.ie/school-guidance-handbook/search?field\\_school\\_category\\_tid=141;](https://www.ncge.ie/school-guidance-handbook/search?field_school_category_tid=141;) [https://www.ncge.ie/fet-guidance-handbook/search?field\\_fet\\_category\\_tid=142;](https://www.ncge.ie/fet-guidance-handbook/search?field_fet_category_tid=142;) <https://www.ncge.ie/covid-19/support/fet/resources/support/doc>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/bildung>

<sup>44</sup> [http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/mlsi29\\_gr/mlsi29\\_gr?OpenDocument](http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/mlsi29_gr/mlsi29_gr?OpenDocument)



number of announcements (Ανακουώσεις) made from the 12th March onwards, regarding the various programmes. These programmes mainly concern grants and similar, for the various vulnerable adults (e.g. unemployment caused by the shutdown, one parent families, child support, sickness pay, temporary closing of businesses etc.). Similarly, in Spain, the Employment Services has temporarily suspended all administrative processes for unemployment registry that do not concern the application and provision of short-term unemployment benefits (*Expediente Temporal de Regulación de Empleo, ERTE*)<sup>45</sup>.

**Box 4: Excerpts from the blog: ‘Careers Expertise in a Time of Crisis – Rethink Current Payment by Results (PBR)’ (UK-England)**

Across England, National Careers Service Prime Contractors are facing imminent collapse at a time when their support services and expertise are most needed in local communities, Dr Deirdre Hughes OBE warned today.

Careers Companies are monitoring job losses and opportunities, they are also using technology to provide moral and practical support to people who have suddenly lost their income and/or livelihood. These companies are working extremely hard to identify and mitigate the risks that Covid-19 poses but they are already experiencing a significant impact which is only likely to get worse:

All staff are working remotely to comply with Government Guidance, many will have to be furloughed as there is not enough work to be undertaken virtually and no funds to pay their salaries.

Job centres are working remotely and are only dealing with claims for Universal Credit, which they are deluged with. Making referrals to the National Careers Service is not a priority. They are the biggest referrer to the National Careers Service and therefore the impact on the PBR contract is significant.

There are concerns about the viability of some sub-contractors, for example, some have temporarily shutdown

All planned events have been cancelled (rightly so) which impacts significantly on Careers Companies’ ability to claim PBR funding from the ESFA unless this stringent approach is relaxed.

The largest PBR payments relate to the achievement of Jobs and Learning Outcomes, staff are finding not surprisingly that customers think it is insensitive to be asked if they have managed to find work or training opportunities at this time.

Many Careers Companies are charities and have very little in the form of reserves to call upon. They are all experiencing a reduction in income from the National Careers Service work and the rate of reduction is accelerating. Some companies are trying to secure bank loans to help with cash flow and enable continued trading but this is proving difficult primarily as they have few assets to offer as security.

When this pandemic is over, young people and adults will need reliable and impartial careers information, advice and guidance which offers hope, guidance and opportunity. Most importantly, individuals will need to be able to ‘put bread on the table’ and thrive in a new social and economic landscape.

Source: Hughes (2020)

Also in Ireland, as a response to the Covid-19 public health emergency, the government announced temporary social welfare payment schemes for all those effected by the Covid-19 work closures. Many

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.sepe.es/HomeSepe>



staff have been redeployed within the sector to address the dramatic increase in applications for such payments. The usual role of case-officer in supporting guidance related activities has been temporarily suspended but these will be reinstated once public health restrictions are eased. Employer engagement activities are ongoing to support businesses as appropriate.

Employment advisors in Malta who were previously focusing on certain target groups were redeployed to work with the newly unemployed who need immediate attention and support. In the current context, a decision was taken to focus the advisory services on the very basic profiling of jobseekers with less time being dedicated to guidance aspects such as career exploration. As a pilot exercise, one member of staff is being transferred from another function to start providing career guidance and advice. All this is being done while facing the difficulties posed by remote working when it comes to training, upskilling and quality assurance. Apart from using written procedures, the adoption of new software played an important role in the coordination of live training sessions and online guidance software demonstrations. With Malta's economy booming in recent years, many non-EU nationals were attracted to employment prospects on the island; some of these employees are losing their jobs as well, and in response, a team of advisors was set up to assist these foreign nationals, with their particular needs.

In Germany, despite all efforts to maintain more in-depth guidance for those in need during the lockdown, the Federal Employment Agency, unemployment claims departments are currently placing a higher priority on ensuring the living income for those dismissed and to support companies in keeping their workforce in times of disrupted demand, above all in retail, the hotel and restaurant industry. Being responsible for both, passive and active labour market measures, the Federal Employment Agency is required to ensure a quick payment of expanded short-time subsidies and, together with municipalities, the payment of allowances in the jobcentres. Germany is facing a drastic increase in applications for short-time work schemes, having proven a very successful instrument of labour market policies during the financial crisis of 2008. Keeping workers in employment despite decreasing demand, they help to cushion effects of economic downturns through avoiding friction costs for job search and recruitment that otherwise would occur. Workers can benefit from training during the period of short-time work. By mid-April, nearly 700 000 applications for short-time work subsidies have been submitted by employers to the Federal Employment Agency. In order to ensure the quickest processing possible, employment and orientation counsellors are temporarily shifted to support the payment services. This has been accompanied by introductory training by the Federal Employment Agency.

#### Moving to distance provision

As in the case of education and training, where possible, public employment services have been forced to move to on-line/distance provision. This depends largely on existing infrastructure, tradition and skills of the career practitioners. As in the case of education and training, web pages have been the first line of action.

The user-oriented web portal of the Federal Employment Agency in Germany also provides guidance service within the labour market sector. They have a portal dedicated to job searches. Online-information and self-help tools are also available on other regional and local (for details, see Cedefop CareersNet country report Germany<sup>46</sup>). Continuity has been maintained by providing numerous

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<sup>46</sup> Country records links are listed in Annex 2



possibilities to contact counsellors of the different relevant agencies (Federal Employment Agency, the Ministry of Education and Research, regional or municipal educational guidance providers for young persons and adults or jobcentres). In Germany, web-portals of many career guidance providers in the field of education and employment offer information and guidance on dedicated web platforms including a connection to telephone hotlines. In addition to the Federal Employment Agency, the Ministry of Education is present with its information phone contact for further training. The Federal Employment Agency has also significantly increased telephone capacities to cope with further requests.

In Estonia, the Unemployment Insurance Fund, a public employment service (PES), provides career guidance services free of charge to everyone, regardless of age or economic activity. COVID-19 has made face-to-face contacts impossible, but different online tools are being used to continue providing support at a time when it is needed most. As in the case with guidance delivered in education settings, employed adults seeking individualised support on career choice can schedule a meeting on the PES self-service portal for counselling via Skype video or telephone. Lifelong guidance in PES is closely linked with other labour market measures. Due to the pandemic situation and growing unemployment career guidance practitioners have greater responsibilities regarding labour market information (LMI). As the situation is very unstable, however, it is quite challenging to consolidate economic/labour market forecasts for future development.

#### **Box 5: Regional career guidance for the employed in France**

At regional level in France, numerous initiatives have been taken in the regions by the partners of the regional public service for guidance (SPRO). Some examples implemented by regional public services for guidance, for communication on the maintenance of support platforms and telephone lines during the period of containment.

Example. 1: Normandy: In order to prepare for the future during the period of confinement, the Normandy Region reminds that the free number [Parcours-métier](#) of the new Regional Agency of Orientation and Trades in Normandy remains accessible. Counsellors are available at 0800 050 000 Monday to Thursday from 9am to 12pm and from 14h to 17h, Friday from 9h to 12h and from 13h30 to 16h30. More information on the website

Example. 2: Nouvelle-Aquitaine: [Cap Métiers](#) (regional information centre on VET) continues to inform and provide answers to all audiences regarding their professional projects (training, trades, employment, financing schemes, etc.), or to help them find their bearings in the training environment, employment and guidance (what professionals and mechanisms mobilise/who does what?).

*France Compétences* has announced that there will be no interruption in the service of the [Conseil en Evolution Professionnel](#) (CEP) in the context of the crisis linked to the coronavirus. The regional operators of the CEP were designated in the fall of 2019 and the system continues to be deployed despite the crisis.

For the public, the continuity of the CEP is ensured in a context of crisis linked to the coronavirus: the counsellors switched to teleworking, the toll-free numbers were transferred to the information officers who provide the telephone reception and the first level of information, and all counsellors had a professional computer and mobile phone at their disposal. Nearly 90% of those who were in follow-up continue to receive support.

Source: CareersNet expert France



In France, the public employment service is mobilising and adapting its operating methods. Remote information, monitoring and assistance resources (telephone, mail, audio-conferencing) are systematically implemented to ensure continuity of service, instead of physical reception in its local agencies. *Pôle Emploi* (French PES) ensured the continuity of online services. This includes numerous types of information and sources of support for job seekers (updating employment situations remotely, tutorials, FAQs, toll-free number to answer questions, etc.)<sup>47</sup>. The *Emploi Store* is a portal adapted to the situation of confinement by offering remote services for career guidance (serious game, virtual guidance coach to help build the pro-course, online courses to identify users' skills, interests)<sup>48</sup>. Also, the *Association pour l'Emploi des Cadres* (Employment service for executives - APEC) has set up remote support solutions by telephone or web conferencing<sup>49</sup>. Some measures for employed people have been also put in place (see box 5).

In Malta, services for Jobseekers, employers and others who need career guidance carried out by Jobsplus (Malta's Public Employment Services) are provided over the phone (see box 6). Jobsplus will continue to provide career guidance even though there will be a change in focus when it comes to the major target groups. On the Jobsplus website is a dedicated page to COVID-19 related issues and its clients can contact the employment advisor through e-mail in addition to phone<sup>50</sup>. The service has become quite relevant in these challenging times given the number of employees who had their work terminated. Employment advisors at Jobsplus previously had the opportunity to refer jobseekers directly to courses, and traineeships offered in-house through their training centre. Jobsplus still offers these initiatives despite the limitations posed by social distancing. Additionally, regarding training courses, trainees are invited for online learning in two courses. Whenever possible, other initiatives such as work exposure, are still taking place though the pool of employers taking on such placements is limited.

Services for unemployed persons with disabilities have been impacted as the advice given by the health authorities is for them to remain at home if they feel at higher risk of contracting COVID-19. Advisory services offered by the profiling and guidance officers of the Lino Spiteri Foundation for persons with disability are still being carried out over the phone. Job coaching is still being offered to disabled persons who decided to continue working on-site. Other forms of support are also being provided to those at home, through telephone or electronically (video call meetings). Employment advisors are still referring jobseekers with mental health difficulties and with substance abuse problems for professional support, through cooperation agreements with specialised NGOs.

Preliminary feedback gathered from employment advisors indicates that it is harder for them to provide career guidance on the phone, with most clients needing to describe how they ended up losing their job, and how it impacted them personally. With the number of clients increasing and sessions becoming longer, employment advisors were given basic tips on how to set clear objectives and timeframes for the sessions at the very beginning of the call.

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<sup>47</sup> [www.pole-emploi.fr/accueil](https://www.pole-emploi.fr/accueil), see also: <https://pro.choisirmonmetier-paysdelaloire.fr/ContentMedia/OPDL/ARTICLES/2020/Pole-emploi-adapte-son-mode-de-fonctionnement>

<sup>48</sup> [www.emploi-store.fr/portail/accueil](https://www.emploi-store.fr/portail/accueil)

<sup>49</sup> [www.apec.fr/](https://www.apec.fr/)

<sup>50</sup> <https://jobsplus.gov.mt/announcement-coronavirus>



Counsellors at eGuidance<sup>51</sup> in Denmark notice that the type of inquiries has changed character. They receive several inquiries from guidance seekers who are either searching for new opportunities in education or in continuing education because they are newly unemployed. The companies also contact eGuidance looking for similar information. Many adults who contact eGuidance have time to reflect on their future choices of jobs and careers. Some want to continue in the same field, while others want to go in a different direction.

#### **Box 6: Jobsplus phone support in Malta**

Jobsplus (Public employment services) has stopped face-to-face interaction arrangements for all advisory staff to be able to telework and all advisory sessions are now being carried out over the phone. Once jobseekers register with Jobsplus, they are allocated an employment advisor who contacts the jobseeker in order to generate the job search profile.

Depending mainly on the needs and facilities available to the jobseeker, the initial phone call by the employment advisor focuses on requesting supplementary information such as qualifications and competencies, through e-mail and the PES's online CV builder. The information is then vetted by the advisor. All the information gathered is then used to match the profile of the jobseeker with suitable vacancies.

Employment advisors are not only, however, depending on vacancies held by Jobsplus, but they are also actively searching for vacancies available through other sources. Jobsplus is already reaching out to employers that may have job opportunities related to the competencies of the current registrants.

Source: CareersNet expert Malta

Individual career counselling has been introduced in Greece in support policies targeted to the unemployed, as compensatory measures to face the pandemic crisis. For example, in May 2020, a public benefit jobs program will be implemented by OAED with 36,500 jobs to be created and targeted to the unemployed, the long-term unemployed and members of single-parent families. The action includes: placement in a specific job for 8 months, in Municipalities, Regional Social Welfare Centres and relevant bodies, services of ministries and other Institutions, as well as an individual career counselling session and a mandatory 150 hours training program leading to skills' certification. Furthermore, distance career counselling initiatives have been initiated by the social partner organisations. For example, the Labour institute (INE) of the Greek workers' confederation (GSEE) proceeded to the provision of remote real-time individual career counselling services by the INE counselling offices targeted to employees and the unemployed, supported by an online teleconferencing platform as well as relevant tools and questionnaires.

In Finland, the national initiative on developing an online platform for distance guidance started a pilot phase in some local one-stop-guidance centres for youth, and within the PES national online career services. The national coordination unit in charge of the development of this tool has allocated additional resources to increase the number of pilot users among the career practitioners. The online services of the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment have a specific section on additional information on the impact of the coronavirus on working life<sup>52</sup>. Employees who are given a notice of termination will have access to the changed security services offered by Employment and

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.ug.dk/evejledning/eguidance-denmark>

<sup>52</sup> <https://tem.fi/en/frequently-asked-questions-about-the-coronavirus-and-working-life>



Economic Development Office (TE Office) already during the notice period. The services provide support for job seeking as well as coaching and training for re-employment<sup>53</sup>.

In Tuscany, public employment services have started a testing phase of e-guidance, using an online video communication platform, but the current number of users reached by this service is still very limited. In the next weeks, the Ministry of Labour should decide when and how the Public Employment Services will be open and which services will be available online. There is a digital gap in many regions and also a need to train most of the practitioners to provide distance services.

The Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) initiated a practice to support the employability of the workers by encouraging the employers to apply for a “limited work allowance”. The employers who must stop working due to the pandemic could apply online for this allowance for their workers. Moreover, flexible work modalities are encouraged within public and private sector. The job and employment counselling interventions, i.e. face-to-face interventions, group activities, school visits, workplace visits and related activities are reduced/postponed due to the pandemic. Plans and preparations for e-guidance are in progress by making all the materials and documents accessible online via the İŞKUR website and mail, setting the infrastructure for e-guidance in the mid and long term. The citizens are encouraged to use the online versions of the services of İŞKUR provincial offices/service centres, i.e. registration, job search, CV preparation and the application to the unemployment allowance.

## Reflections from CareersNet

Using CareersNet members’ brief inquiries into lifelong guidance in the face of the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, some CareersNet experts offered reflections based on their own professional views and in light of national developments. This information is summarised below:

- Some experts reflected on whether the decisions taken involved structural innovation or short-term responses and solutions to various (urgent) challenges or needs. In general, reforms requiring major investments in technical infrastructure and changes in the communication culture will not be possible at the short term. In Germany, adjustment to the lockdown focused on steering clients toward already existing telephone hotlines increasing their capacities as much as possible (Germany)
- As the expert for Hungary argued, guidance service delivery via the Internet is dependent on the general maturity level of national/regional infrastructure, the development of e-school, e-LMS (learning management systems), and the competency level of the users. An approach to evaluating the country approaches during crisis time might involve a continuum from non-existing e-services via "old" Skype-based (e.g., classical telephone-based services) towards ‘co-careering’ digital based service-delivery (Hungary).
- Although there has been a rush to use what in some countries is considered new digital technologies such as web-based interactive tools, some experts noted that the more traditional media such as TV and radio are also valid, which offers users more choices (France).

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.



- In addition, guidance crosses many sectors and services, so without the overall assessment of the labour market situation and that of the different levels of the education system it is difficult to talk about guidance services, which are usually attached to the employment or educational sectors (Hungary).
- With the reliance on digital technologies for delivery of career guidance during the pandemic, access and wider social inclusion were an underlying theme in several countries. The Danish expert drew on the ideas of Peter Plant, a professor in the guidance field in Norway, who argued that while ICT enhances the use of and the access to lifelong guidance, some groups will likely be excluded who lack resources and ICT competences. Plant had rightly foreseen in 1989 paper though his concept of kitchen-table guidance, that ICT would become “part and parcel of everyday life in all its aspects” “with great force” and “with a sudden and unexpected leap”, which also necessitates a refocusing on the quality of these guidance interventions<sup>54</sup> (Denmark).
- Access for all groups of young learners is tied to improvements in practitioner training so that all students can benefit. Guidance counsellor David Spak, who runs a blog in the paper of the National Union for Teachers, argues that Swedish guidance practitioners lack knowledge on the right tools to reach their clients in the current crisis<sup>55</sup>. Some students have an advantage, for example pupils who have high confidence and parents who have the capacity to help; these students are more likely to receive the guidance needed. Students who are already socially disadvantaged at school will have an even tougher time during the crisis with distance guidance. Spak encourages the many talented guidance practitioners in Sweden to support their colleagues who are less able: guidance counsellors must show a high level of solidarity. Collegial exchange can be facilitated (Sweden).
- Revisit payment by results (PBR) arrangements, identify and broaden priority groups (England)
- The issue of equity and social inclusion was also raised in relation to the type of assessments used during the crisis period, since guidance processes use academic results. The use of summative assessments to determine academic results in France, may serve to favour certain student profiles over others. This needs to be addressed, in addition to rethinking individualised approaches to teaching and learning. The different forms of personalised learning and the very notion of learning assessment might be reviewed in light of what happened during the crisis, to allow for better individualization that meets the needs of all pupils (France).
- The complete shift away from in-person interaction and communication in guidance and counselling services to online career guidance sheds light on the important role that personal contact plays in guidance delivery (Spain).
- Different techniques were shared in response to the overuse of computer and imposition of rigid timetables for students, in addition to reducing burden on learners, guidance professionals and parents. One suggestion is the use of alternating guidance-related learning and provision through online interactive exercises aiming to facilitate learning,

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<sup>54</sup> Email to CareersNet guidance expert in Denmark from Peter Plant, Professor, University of South-East Norway, 16.04.2020

<sup>55</sup> <https://skolvarlden.se/artiklar/syv-i-coronakrisen-ar-daligt-rustade>



communication and orientation. This can help balance timetable structures and rhythm (France).

- “When it comes to the content or aims for career guidance, we might also experience a pendulum shift towards more ‘first aid guidance’ for people in need of finding a job to secure an income. The focus on developing career management skills (CMS) to meet a more liquid and unpredictable society might also be amplified. In conclusion, my impression on the Norwegian context is a focus on adaptation of services [...] but also maybe on the aims of guidance” (Norway).

## Provisional recommendations from CareersNet members

Some CareersNet experts also offered recommendations based on their understanding of the system gaps that became apparent, and what is needed to improve the system and ultimately benefit individuals, especially those most in need. These ideas are grouped according to categories listed below.

Governance, policy tools, dedicated strategies:

- Implementation of the recommendations of the national review would create an overarching national guidance strategy, to include an interim plan for the current responses needed, to involve all relevant stakeholders; formal coordinated, considered plan for guidance policy across government departments and for guidance delivery now and into the future; funding allocated specifically to ICT developments to include a national/regional/local approach to online career guidance information and service provision (Ireland)
- Locate guidance mechanisms or policy strategies that will provide an appropriate response to the problems countries are facing. Address the key issues in guidance stemming from the crisis: how to respond to early school leaving from education and training (VET and apprenticeships); how to manage professional transitions; how to reduce the digital divide and inequalities that the pandemic threw into relief (France).
  - Other issues for adults: change of professions for those facing health risks; dropout from apprenticeships loss of company funding; unemployment, etc.
  - Other issues for youth and younger students: social digital gap increases - those who have digital tools and those who do not; higher dropout rate in VET; geographical disparities; decreased student mobility towards metropolitan France; increased anxiety or psychological disorders
- Funding for career guidance should be part of a package of measures (Malta).

Implement and support digitalisation of guidance services

- Support digitalisation and e-governance in guidance at EU level including a conceptual discussion for which cases and for which target groups physical face-to-face services are needed and in which cases the future will be focusing on interactive online career counselling sessions (Germany).



- Digitalise interventions and services due to the social-distancing measures. Telephone, digital interviews, webchats are attractive. Long-term professional integration and individual empowerment in the use of digital technologies is vital (Turkey).
- Greater investment in technical infrastructures and workforce development is often needed at national level in order to support more effective use of ICT during and after the pandemic (Turkey).

Improve cooperation, collaboration and knowledge-building and exchange:

- Strengthen the evidence-base by capturing current impacts and recommendations to national, regional and/or local decision-makers (UK).
- Strengthen an exchange at national and at regional level among main guidance providers in the field of education and employment on service concepts, tools, ethical considerations, data protection, staff competences and training manuals to foster both customer-oriented interactive web tools and professional service provision (Germany).
- Guidance experts should support, train, share knowledge with, practitioners and relevant ministries, to raise awareness and find concrete actions to implement (Denmark).
- The pandemic has shed light on how to improve coordination and communication. Gaps are being exposed in school-level networks and teamwork that can hinder efforts in social and educational counselling. In Estonia, for example, schools without functional teamwork are those who are facing greater difficulties in providing these supports to all students (Estonia).
- Now more than ever we need to further strengthen collaboration with national and local organisations to further support our clients in their needs (i.e. economic and social needs) – hence collaborating with the public employment service, social services, disability services, etc. – so clients feel supported in all ways. This means reshaping the design of career delivery in a way where there is less compartmentalisation of services and where we move towards innovative and diverse ways of service delivery (Malta).
- A single practitioner, professional group or organisation could no longer be able to respond to this crisis. This implies the need to create multi-professional and cross-sectoral networks. Moreover, two new key actors have been identified: health and well-being professionals; and data providers. Greater networking possibilities need to be promoted by using digital technologies during the pandemic and after the pandemic with a blend of face-to-face (Turkey).
- Career guidance is an example of an area where there should be shared policy and administrative responsibility among several ministries at national and regional levels. Key features in a well-functioning service network are collaborative creation of knowledge, inclusive collaboration and emergent development of leadership and management in networks. This is significantly valid and pivotal during and after the pandemic (Turkey).
- Support collection of practices: Interactive online guidance - (service concept, processes, data protection, staff competences and training and analysis); use of AI in guidance – collection of practices and analysis including ethical considerations (Germany and UK).

Use a holistic perspective to guidance:



- In these times of crisis, the provision of career guidance should be diversified, based on two underlying approaches. Firstly, career guidance should be offered to potential clients as part of multidisciplinary array of psychosocial services, such as counselling and social work. This will enable those individuals who have been worst hit by this crisis (most often those people within the lower spheres of society) to access psychosocial services and thus improve their current situation. Subsequently, the provision of career guidance should also take into consideration the future, once the spread of the pandemic has been controlled by the respective authorities. Hence, efforts should be made to help potential clients get the necessary skills and competencies to return to the world of work as soon as possible (Malta).
- Career guidance has to help people understand how the pandemic shapes /will shape their lives, jobs, relations and future plans with a holistic perspective. In addition to supporting the individuals in educational, training and career development domains, the individuals need to be supported for their well-being (Turkey).

Practitioners - offer continuing training for practitioners at all levels:

- Nationally agreed CPD programme for guidance practitioners across sectors, on providing guidance supports for students and adults (Ireland).
  - The continued professional development of guidance practitioners requires a clarification of the role of guidance and a formal policy approach to ensure and reflect the need for up-to-date skills and competences.
- There should be an increase in more formal learning at all higher educational levels. To these ends, the national insurance fund supports training of guidance practitioners, and in addition, stresses communication between ministries and practitioners to implement actions in the field, in the current crisis (Denmark).
- Update of European competence profiles for career guidance (e.g. NICE) and employment counsellors (European reference competence profile for PES and EURES counsellors) – adding a module on online communication, use of social media (Germany).

Provide additional resources and information to guidance teachers:

- Regarding VET, the creation of virtual counselling opportunities centrally for different target groups has paid off in Estonia; systems need to be developed that are more convenient for VET schools. As the main support to students and parents in VET is carried out by the schools in Estonia, teachers need flexible means for their own support and valuable knowhow. Various resources are suggested: embedding links to Töötukassa (Estonian PES) and the Rajaleidja counselling services in schools' intranets; webinars for teachers; creation centrally of materials and manuals for the most common e-platforms; boost in sharing best practices shared among schools (Estonia).
- Self-learning tools and platforms that offer different career information, self-assessment, etc. tools, have proved to be important during the crisis period. There are several such tools already existing in Serbia. However, the provision of information about these tools as well as motivation of students to use them is needed. Key actors in providing this kind of information are teachers as career practitioners so the focus of support should also be on this target group (Serbia).



Increase dissemination of updated support information for all:

- Increase targeted and updated information to all, such as guidelines, user manuals, etc (Germany). For example:
  - online information
  - guiding online towards mail exchange; telephone contacts and expand capacities for this; and towards interactive video exchange and develop, expand line capacities for this (cannot be established at the short term if technical equipment is not in place, in general - push introduction of interactive tools and service concepts in case this is not in place.
- Both employers and job seekers should be made aware of the new digital initiatives through public television and radio, advertisements on social media and private web pages, and mass mailing of all the partner-employers of the PES (Romania).

Update LMI (labour market information) on a frequent and continuous basis:

- The pandemic and urgent need for universal ICT skills highlights the need for provision of accessible, up-to-date and accurate labour market, education and careers information and accessible online guidance services to support individuals in career and education decision making (Ireland).
- The LM information in countries need to be updated as there could be new modes of work and new demands of the labour market with all the changes and the “new realities” of the labour market (Turkey).

Support updating of skills, knowledge and competences:

- Ensure the evolution of career development and career management skills in education and training. Supporting individuals to review their skills and competences to identify upskilling needs to support career progression and opportunities (Ireland).
- Career guidance practices should give more emphasis to the issues of flexibility, adaptability and resilience, in responding to challenges faced. This applies to everyday practices of career guidance professionals as well as the beneficiaries they serve (Greece).
- Job search procedures and skills development during the pandemic should be explored in relation to lessons learned from the employment and digital transformation (e.g. 3D printing in health products) (Greece).
- Hooley, T., Sultana R.S. and Thomsen, R. (2020) in ‘Why a social justice informed approach to career guidance matters in the time of coronavirus’ state that “career guidance needs to radically and quickly reform its messages”. This has great implications as to how we are going to help our clients approach building their careers after the COVID 19 pandemic – we need to work on helping them have the knowledge, competences and abilities which will allow them to explore a range of different solutions, to think critically which solution best serves them – empowering them to seek approaches that they are entitled to. To survive in such turbulent water, clients need specific employability skills - flexibility, self-confidence, adaptability and resilience, amongst others (Malta).

Concluding thoughts:



- This pandemic may introduce new ways and new mentalities of reaching and working with individuals. There are skills that need to be prioritised in guidance interventions during the pandemic. The important thing is to help others become more resilient. The counsellors are in a good position to help explore feelings of their clients in order to support their general well-being (Turkey).
- This crisis has jump-started the process of improving online services and it is providing all of us the necessary experience to be able to fine tune such online services. Many mentioned that in future entities will be in a better position to use technology to enhance their service (Malta).
- This pandemic has broadened our way of doing things, new ways of working which practitioners might not have tried out, tending to rely on traditional methods. Many colleagues who work in the education and employment sector are emphasising the importance of reaching out to their students/jobseekers through telephone, emails, chat, Facebook, Zoom, video conferencing, etc. However, since we are dealing with video conferencing/sessions quite frequently – some aspects are to be re-examined such as GDPR, online recording issues and rights and obligations for both the clients and the career guidance practitioner (Malta).
- There is a need now to reflect on the role that digital technology should have in the future of education and career guidance, e.g. for personalisation of learning/career guidance. AI-powered systems could have helped teachers, students and parents, employers and unemployed people navigate the range of digital learning resources out there if they were more available and ready to use. Employers should move recruitment online and make more development activities virtual. Efficient tools to host job fairs online are needed (Romania).



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## Annex 1: CareersNet contributors

Table 1– CareersNet national experts who contributed content

<b>Country</b>	<b>Expert</b>
1. Bulgaria	Afrikanov Lachezar
2. Cyprus	Chrystalleni Lena Nicolaou
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9. Hungary	Tibor Bors Borbély-Pecze
10. Ireland	Jennifer McKenzie
11. Italy	Giulio Iannis
12. Malta	Dorianne Gravina
13. Norway	Erik Haug
14. Romania	Angelica-Mariana Andrei
15. Serbia	Marko Bankovic
16. Spain	Luis Carro
17. Switzerland	Daniel Reumiller
18. Sweden	Nina Ahlroos
19. Turkey	Fusun Akkok
20. United Kingdom	Deirdre Hughes



## Annex 2: Inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices

### Austria

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-austria>

### Bulgaria

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-bulgaria>

### Cyprus

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-cyprus>

### Denmark

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-denmark>

### Estonia

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-estonia>

### Finland

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-finland>

### France

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-france>

### Germany

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-germany>

### Greece

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-greece>

### Hungary

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-hungary>

### Ireland



<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-ireland>

#### Italy

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-italy>

#### Luxembourg

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-luxembourg>

#### Malta

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-malta>

#### Montenegro

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-montenegro>

#### Norway

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-norway>

#### Portugal

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-portugal>

#### Romania

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-romania>

#### Serbia

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-serbia>

#### Sweden

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-sweden>

#### Turkey

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-turkey>

#### UK/England



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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-uk-england>

UK/Northern Ireland

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-uk-northern-ireland>

UK/Wales

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-uk-wales>

UK/Scotland

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-uk-scotland>

Netherlands

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-netherlands>



## Annex 3: Webpages provided by CareersNet

### CYPRUS

<http://www.hrdauth.org.cy/el/%CE>

<http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi>

<http://www.moec.gov.cy/ysea/index.html>

<https://www.eschoolcounselor.com/?fbclid=IwAR02McG27NbY-gDxgjigfVquvVKhiN2JG7SQ8dPckMk>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2907556365957500/>

### DENMARK

<https://www.hk.dk/aktuelt/nyheder/2020/03/>

<https://www.kompetansenorge.no/Karriereveiledning/digitale-verktoy-i-v>

<https://www.ug.dk/evejledning/eguidance-denmark>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9dNL92uMwQ> | s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBNbMvNBhYk>

[www.hk.dk/onlinekurser](http://www.hk.dk/onlinekurser) – which is a way

[www.ug.dk/evejledning](http://www.ug.dk/evejledning).

[www.voksenuddannelse.dk](http://www.voksenuddannelse.dk)

### ESTONIA

<https://www.facebook.com/Education-Nation-112419100228350>

<https://www.tootukassa.ee/eng/content/services/career-counselling>

<https://www.minukarjaar.ee/MK/e-teenused>

<https://www.onlineexpo.com/en/temporary-job-offers/>

### GERMANY

<http://forum-beratung.de/>

<http://www.dvb-fachverband.de/dvb.html>

<http://www.imbse-gmbh.de/>

<https://www.aewb-nds.de/aewb/aktuelle>

<https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/corona-virus-aktuelle-informationen>

<https://www.pi-muenchen.de/aktuelles-bildungsberatung>

<https://www.weiterbildung-hamburg.de/>

### GREECE

<http://www.oaed.gr/documents/10195/1214556/%CE%94%CE%95%CE%9B%CE%A4%CE%99%CE%9F+%CE%A4%CE%A5%CE%A0%CE%9F%CE%A5+e->

<http://www.oaed.gr/documents/10195/1214556/%CE%94%CE%95%CE%9B%CE%A4%CE%99%CE%95%CE%A3+%CE%9F%CE%91%CE%95%CE%94+9+4+20.pdf/ef0f564a-8be0-490a-b027-617f567378cb>

<https://www.aueb.gr/en/content/grafeio>

<https://www.cais.upatras.gr/node/98>

<https://www.gov.gr/>

<https://www.greecefromhome.com/>

<https://www.minedu.gov.gr/rss/44570-03-04-20-symvouleftiki-ypostiriksi-se-zitimata-epaggelmatikoy-prosanatolismoy-3>

**FINLAND**

[https://minedu.fi/en/article/-/asset\\_publisher/varhaiskasvatuksen-opetuksen-ja-koulutuksen-rajoituksia-jatketaan-13-toukokuuta-asti](https://minedu.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/varhaiskasvatuksen-opetuksen-ja-koulutuksen-rajoituksia-jatketaan-13-toukokuuta-asti)

<https://www.verke.org/verke/?lang=en>

**FRANCE**

[enil.fr/portes-ouvertes-virtuelles](http://enil.fr/portes-ouvertes-virtuelles)

<https://www.education.gouv.fr/sites/default>

<https://www.egalite-femmes-hommes.gouv.fr>

<https://www.stopblues.fr/fr/detente/covid>

[www.ac-strasbourg.fr/fileadmin/public](http://www.ac-strasbourg.fr/fileadmin/public)

[www.apec.fr/](http://www.apec.fr/)

[www.banquedesterritoires.fr/continuite-pedagogique-taux](http://www.banquedesterritoires.fr/continuite-pedagogique-taux)

[www.cap-metiers.pro/actualites/22780](http://www.cap-metiers.pro/actualites/22780)

[www.cned.fr/maclassealamaison](http://www.cned.fr/maclassealamaison)

[www.crous-nantes.fr/](http://www.crous-nantes.fr/)

[www.crous-strasbourg.fr/](http://www.crous-strasbourg.fr/)

[www.education.gouv.fr/bo/20](http://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/20)

[www.education.gouv.fr/continuite-pedagogique](http://www.education.gouv.fr/continuite-pedagogique)

[www.education.gouv.fr/operation-nation](http://www.education.gouv.fr/operation-nation)

[www.education.gouv.fr/recommandations-aux](http://www.education.gouv.fr/recommandations-aux)

[www.education.gouv.fr/sites/default](http://www.education.gouv.fr/sites/default)

[www.emploi-store.fr/portail/accueil](http://www.emploi-store.fr/portail/accueil)

[www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid149997](http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid149997)

[www.etudiant.gouv.fr/cid150432/covid](http://www.etudiant.gouv.fr/cid150432/covid)

[www.etudiant.gouv.fr/pid33626-cid150278](http://www.etudiant.gouv.fr/pid33626-cid150278)

[www.formation-industries-lorraine.com/fr](http://www.formation-industries-lorraine.com/fr)

[www.lumni.fr/article/revisez-avec](http://www.lumni.fr/article/revisez-avec)

[www.monorientationenligne.fr](http://www.monorientationenligne.fr)

[www.onisep.fr](http://www.onisep.fr)

[www.onisep.fr/Pres-de-chez](http://www.onisep.fr/Pres-de-chez)

[www.onisep.fr/Tchats](http://www.onisep.fr/Tchats)

[www.pedagogique-a-l-orientation.html](http://www.pedagogique-a-l-orientation.html)

[www.pedopsydebre.org/fiches-pratiques/categories](http://www.pedopsydebre.org/fiches-pratiques/categories)

[www.pole-emploi.fr/accueil](http://www.pole-emploi.fr/accueil)

[www.reseau-canope.fr/cap-ecole](http://www.reseau-canope.fr/cap-ecole)

**IRELAND**

<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education>

<https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/4cf0e2>

<https://www.ncge.ie/covid-19/support>

<https://www.ncge.ie/covid-19/support/fet/resources/support/doc>



<https://www.ncge.ie/covid-19/support/post-primary/resources/slideshow>  
<https://www.ncge.ie/covid-19/support/post-primary/resources/support/doc>  
[https://www.ncge.ie/fet-guidance-handbook/search?field\\_fet\\_category\\_tid=142](https://www.ncge.ie/fet-guidance-handbook/search?field_fet_category_tid=142)  
[https://www.ncge.ie/school-guidance-handbook/search?field\\_school\\_category\\_tid=141](https://www.ncge.ie/school-guidance-handbook/search?field_school_category_tid=141)  
<https://www.solas.ie/information-covid-19/>  
<https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/4cf0e2employers-and-employees-test/>  
<https://www.wicklow.ie/>

### ITALY

<https://www.miur.gov.it/web/guest/-/l>  
<https://www.unibg.it/node/9342>  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUOtouzjbRV97coWrsIZB6Q>

### MALTA

<http://www.mcga.org.mt/covid-19>  
<https://www.facebook.com/mcgamalta/photos/rpp.561304383999243/2555525324577129/?type=3&theater>  
<https://www.um.edu.mt/study/duringcovid-19>

### NORWAY

<https://www.nav.no/arbeid/dagpenger/permittert?lan>  
<https://www.nav.no/person/koronaveiviser/>

### ROMANIA

### SERBIA

<http://www.razvojkarijere.bg.ac.rs/>  
<https://www.digitalnasolidarnost.gov.rs/>

### SPAIN

<http://santaeulalia.net/index.php/es/47-root/formacio/196-orientacion-laboral>  
<http://www.apoclam.info>  
<http://www.educa.jccm.es/en>  
<http://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/dam/jcr:92ceca87-b815-4a75-aa1c-85f86c38fb0f/orientaciones-y-herramientas-para-hacer-accesibles-las-propuestas-educativas.pdf>  
<http://www.impefe.es>  
<https://copoe.org/comunicados/item/668-consejos-de-copoe-ante-la-situacion-de-que-darse-en-casa-para-afrontar-la-crisis-del-coronavirus>  
[https://emprego.xunta.gal/porta/es/11-demandantes/demandantes-sp/485-medidas-urgentes-covid-19-en-materia-de-empleo.html" \ | "medidas-extraordinarias-para-personas-demandantes](https://emprego.xunta.gal/porta/es/11-demandantes/demandantes-sp/485-medidas-urgentes-covid-19-en-materia-de-empleo.html)  
<https://padlet.com/>  
<https://www.20minutos.es/noticia/4196971/0/adecco-ofrece-en-cyl-70-programas-gratuitos-de-formacion-yreorientacion-laboral-durante-la-crisis-del-covid-19/>  
<https://www.adeccorientaempleo.com/aprovechar-el-confinamiento-para-mejorar-tu-formacion-119003/>



<https://www.apoecyl.org/recursos-orientacion/item/informate-guia-de-bachillerato-en-centros-de-castilla-y-leon>  
<https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2020/03/14/pdfs/BOE-A-2020-3692.pdf>  
<https://www.educaweb.com/noticia/2020/04/02/recursos-orientacion-online-tiempos-covid-19-19133/>  
<https://www.eldigitaldecidadreal.com/2020/04/17/el-ayuntamiento-de-alcazar-reorganiza-el-servicio-de-orientacion-laboral/>  
<https://www.empleacantabria.es/covid>  
<https://www.europapress.es/economia/macroeconomia-00338/noticia-adecco-ofrecera-programas-gratuitos-formacion-reorientacion-laboral-crisis-covid-19-20200323093148.html>  
<https://www.inaemorienta.es/>  
<https://www.infojobs.net/>  
[https://www.lacomarcadepuertollano.com/diario/noticia/2020\\_04\\_15/26](https://www.lacomarcadepuertollano.com/diario/noticia/2020_04_15/26)  
<https://www.madrid.es/portales/munimadrid/es/ae/Agencia-para-el-Empleo-de-Madrid/?vgnextfmt=default&vgnextoid=c65815fa10294110VgnVCM1000000b205a0aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=68a32a1a113b5110VgnVCM1000000b205a0aRCRD&idCapitulo=11160000>

#### SWEDEN

<https://www.government.se/press-releases/2020/03/>  
<https://www.skolverket.se/for-dig-som-ar>  
<https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/leda-och-org>  
<https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/organisera-och-und>  
<https://www.uhr.se/om-uhr/nyheter/pre>  
<https://www.uhr.se/syv/infor-en-utl>  
[www.uhr.se/euroguidance](http://www.uhr.se/euroguidance)

#### SWITZERLAND

<https://www.berufsberatung.ch>

#### UK

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/>  
<https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/has-your-job-been-affected-covid-19-coronavirus>  
[www.redundancyscotland.co.uk](http://www.redundancyscotland.co.uk)