



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

IAEVG MAGAZINE

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Riding the Wave of
Change

Professionalisation
and Competence

From around
the World

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PRESIDENTS' COLUMN

Dear IAEVG Members and Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the IAEVG Magazine—our first issue under the new name and fresh design. This relaunch reflects not only a new visual identity, but a continued commitment to our mission and vibrant global community.

This issue arrives at a moment when, across continents, we are witnessing a world in motion. Trade tensions are reshaping economies, technological leaps are transforming workplaces, and conflict and climate crises continue to test the strength of our societies. At the same time, the rapid integration of artificial intelligence into everyday life is opening new possibilities—while also presenting ethical questions for our field.

In the middle of this constant change, our work takes on renewed importance and our mission continues with purpose: to

provide meaningful, ethical and accessible guidance to all. It is this purpose that anchors us when everything else seems in flux.

These powerful lines from our Conference Opening Ceremony last year continue to resonate with me as I write this column.

”Words!

*Find them, you can use them;
Say them, you can hear them;
Write them, you can read them;
Love them, fear them...”*

The song reminded us all of the universal importance of communication—how a single word can connect, inspire, challenge, and move us. As educational, vocational and career guidance and counselling professionals, we harness this power every day in our work with individuals navigating an increasingly complex world. Let’s keep choosing our words wisely, share them generously, and harness their power for positive change.

I wish you many interesting and inspiring moments with this renewed edition of our Magazine, and I look forward to the new contributions it will spark. I encourage each of you to stay actively engaged with the IAEVG. Your participation, contributions and feedback are invaluable.

Together, we can continue to make meaningful progress in advancing the quality, accessibility and impact of guidance services worldwide.

Warm greetings,
Jaana Kettunen

President of IAEVG
president@iaevg.com

EDITORIAL

Everything changes, but some things stay the same. This motto could be written not only about this issue of the Magazine, but also about its content, our associations, the demands on the competencies of guidance counsellors and the world in which the people who receive professional support live.

The magazine: We're excited to present the first issue under our new name and design. We hope you enjoy the fresh look and find that it makes reading and contributing to the MAGAZINE even more engaging.

Our associations: in a world that is changing so quickly and dramatically, with the challenges of migration, the world of work, educational opportunities, digitalisation and not least the culture of political interaction, associations are more important than ever, and yet they are also under pressure to change and adapt.

The contents: Guidance counselor competencies must be understood in the context of the tension between the fundamental requirements for the conditions of professional-human interaction and the challenges of our time. We are interested in how different regions

and countries are responding to this challenge and in this issue, we present several articles on this topic. We warmly encourage all members—especially those from different global regions and new member associations—to contribute their experiences and expertise to future editions.

This topic is embedded in other articles from the IAEVG, the IJEVG Journal and member associations. All in all, change remains the continuum. A statement that should not frighten guidance counsellors! We wish you much interest and good insights while reading.

The next issue of our MAGAZINE will focus on digital developments in guidance (including artificial intelligence). We invite contributions from our global community and welcome articles with either a national or international focus. Your expertise and experience are vital in advancing our collective understanding and practice in these areas.

Peter Weber
General Editor
editor@iaevg.com



Call for contributions for next issue: Digital developments in guidance

We welcome your contributions to this theme, whether they focus on national initiatives or provide an international perspective. Articles can explore the development, implementation and impact of digital technologies (including artificial intelligence), highlight good practice and innovative approaches, or present research. We invite you to submit your articles, research findings, case studies and personal experiences related to the upcoming theme. Your insights will be invaluable to our global community of guidance professionals.

Please send your contributions to editor@iaevg.com
Deadline for issue 96: **June 15th**.



RIDING THE WAVE OF CHANGE

IAEVG'S 47th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN JYVÄSKYLÄ, FINLAND

BY JAANA KETTUNEN

The event brought together more than 700 participants from all over the world: more than 400 guidance professionals and experts from 45 different countries, and more than 300 participants followed the event remotely. The conference was organised by the Finnish Institute for Educational Research at the University of Jyväskylä in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. The three-day event provided participants with a rich content in which researchers, decision-makers and practitioners met and engaged in meaningful dialogue.



The theme of the conference, "Riding the Wave of Change", reflected the key issues of the field of guidance in a rapidly changing world. At the heart of the theme is the idea that change is not something to resist, but rather an opportunity to evolve. Speakers addressed the theme in presentations, workshops, symposia and posters through seven sub-themes, which were: accessible and user-centered guidance services; digital evolution in guidance services; high-quality guidance services; equity, diversity and inclusion in guidance services; sustainability in guidance; cross-sectoral and coordinated guidance services and evidence-based practices in guidance.

In the keynote speeches of the conference, Dr. Pedro Moreno da Fonseca from International Labour Organization (ILO), emphasized the pivotal role that career guidance can play in connecting policies that play a key role in ensuring social justice, during current global transformations, including lifelong learning, social protection, industrial and environmental policies. He



“More than a conference, A global community!”

stressed that career development needs to be a core component of skills development and employment creation, to move from fragmented, low impact policies and initiatives to outcome-oriented approaches that are truly significant to learners and workers. This requires well coordinated policies within an enabling approach—where career guidance is not seen as a "silver bullet, but as an important part within a broader framework.

IAEVG conference highlighted the important contributions of international agencies in advancing career guidance systems worldwide. In a joint presentation ILO, OECD, UNESCO and CEDEFOP presented recent initiatives and research focused on strengthening lifelong guidance across diverse contexts. The members of the Inter-

Agency Career Guidance Working Group (IAG) also outlined promising perspectives for future cooperation between IAG and IAEVG.



Anthony Mann (OECD), Cynthia Harrison Villalba (CEDEFOP), Pedro Moreno da Fonseca (ILO), Jaana Kettunen (IAEVG) and Ramon Iriarte (UNESCO).



In his speech, Professor Spencer Niles examined the importance of authenticity in guidance – a theme that is particularly topical in a digitalising world. Dr. Niles emphasized that recognizing and expressing one's authentic self are key factors when individuals navigate in the midst of change. According to him, authenticity is not only an individual process, but also a core value of guidance. He emphasized that authenticity helps people make meaningful choices and build lives that reflect their values and goals.

“Authenticity is not only an individual process, but also a core value of guidance!”

Representatives from Finland’s Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment shared key insights from the country’s lifelong guidance strategy process. The

strategy’s core elements and implementation efforts were presented outlined. A panel discussion brought together perspectives from both ministries and an international expert to reflect on lessons learned and their broader relevance. The exchange underscored the importance of cross-sectoral cooperation.

The conference concluded with a panel discussion titled, *“Riding the Digital Wave”*, moderated by Dr. Raimo Vuorinen. The session explored the impacts of digitalisation and digital transformation on lifelong guidance

and learning. The panellists included Jaana Kettunen (IAEVG), Petri Lempinen (Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland), Anthony Mann (OECD) and Ernesto Villalba (Cedefop). The discussion highlighted how digital technologies can enhance the accessibility of guidance services and enable more personalised support for diverse user groups.

The panel also addressed the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) and data in career, educational and vocational guidance. The discussion underscored the importance of ongoing professional development to ensure that practitioners are well-equipped to engage with both existing and emerging technologies. Strengthening AI literacy—including ethical technology use and the ability to critically interpret data—was highlighted as essential. These empower practitioners to harness the full potential of digital tools thoughtfully and effectively, while staying mindful of their limitations.

During the IAEVG General Assembly, a communique —*“The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Career, Educational, and Vocational Guidance: Opportunities and Challenges”*—was officially adopted.





Awards were presented at the IAEVG 2024 International Conference to recognise outstanding contributions in the field.

IAEVG Annual Award 2024

Karen Schober (Germany)

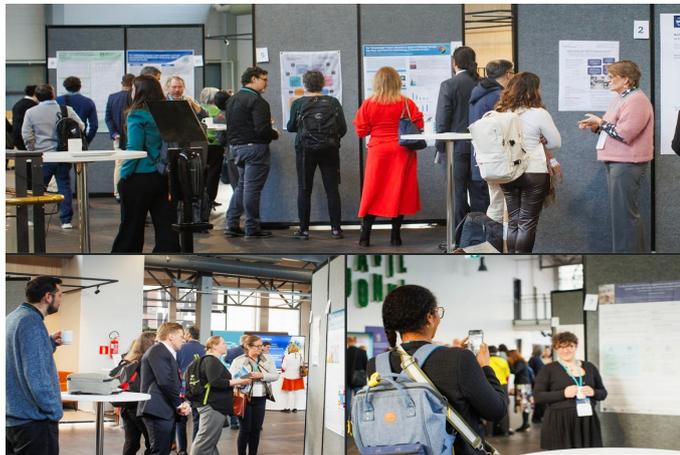
Honoured for her exceptional contributions to the field of guidance and dedicated service to the IAEVG.

Best Paper Award – IAEVG 2024 International Conference

Dr. Ooi Pei Boon (Malaysia)

Best Poster Award – IAEVG 2024 International Conference (Inaugural)

Aline Vansoeterstede (France)



There were 45 brilliant posters on display at the conference. It was wonderful to see so many people taking a closer look, engaging with the presenters, and sparking meaningful discussions. The energy was palpable as we all learned from one another and celebrated the hard work behind each project.



Conference Banquet! Ida Elina, took the stage and completely stole our hearts! For anyone unfamiliar, the kantele is a traditional Finnish string instrument, and Ida brings it to life in the most modern, captivating way. Think "Mamma Mia" played on a kantele—yes, it was as fantastic as it sounds! The energy in the room was electric and many of us couldn't resist joining in for a few dance steps and a bit of singing.



Our host kicked off the Conference by inviting everyone to make noise or wave if their country was called out!



IAEVG Conference participants—united in purpose, sharing knowledge, and shaping the future of guidance and counselling worldwide.

We sincerely thank all the participants, volunteers, host and partners from making this conference truly memorable!



IAEVG Board members at the conference (from left to right):

Jean-Jacques Ruppert (Luxembourg), Mary McMahon (Australia), Ilze Jansone (Latvia), Jérôme Rossier (Switzerland), Jaana Kettunen (Finland), Michel Turcotte (Canada), Jane Goodman (USA), and Sachin Kumar (India).

IAEVG INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2024 PRESENTATION AVAILABLE

The presentations from the IAEVG International Conference 2024 are accessible on the official conference website: <https://iaevgconference2024.fi>

The first set of video recordings are available exclusively to IAEVG members, with more sessions to be uploaded in the coming months. Members have received an email with access instructions.



LOOKING AHEAD: IAEVG INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026 IN AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

As the IAEVG International Conference 2024 drew to close, participants were warmly invited by Craig Dyason, President of CATE to the IAEVG International Conference 2026, set to take place in November 2026 in Auckland, New Zealand.

We encourage you to save the date in your calendars and join us for what promises to be an inspiring event.

For updates and more information, be sure to follow

<https://iaevg.com/IAEVG-Conferences>



IAEVG 2024 Communiqué

The Role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Career, Educational and Vocational Guidance: Opportunities and Challenges

Adopted by the IAEVG General Assembly, November 13, 2024

With the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI), our field stands at a significant juncture. AI technologies are transforming the nature of work and learning, reshaping job markets and workplaces and bringing forth new ethical considerations that directly impact career, educational, and vocational guidance. As an international association committed to promoting equitable access to quality guidance for all, the IAEVG acknowledges both the immense opportunities AI offers and the responsibilities it brings to our practices, values, and professional standards.

AI' Potential in Guidance

The integration of AI in career, educational, and vocational guidance, including career development, provides substantial opportunities to enhance accessibility, personalisation, and overall effectiveness. AI-

powered tools such as data-driven career forecasting, career development and matching algorithms, and personalised learning paths, offer guidance practitioners a way to support clients more dynamically. By harnessing large datasets and sophisticated machine learning models, these tools have the potential to identify emerging job trends, predict skill demands, and suggest individualised career paths that meet with the individual preferences and strengths.

In addition, AI has the potential to promote the interoperability of guidance system features and expand access to guidance services for all, aligning with IAEVG's mission to ensure that career, educational, and vocational guidance and counselling is universally available. AI-supported and other digital communication technologies allow virtual career, educational, and vocational

guidance and automated support enabling a broader reach to people who might not have access to in-person services, prefer online services or wish to have anonymous interaction.

Ethical and Social Considerations in AI-Enhanced Guidance

Despite its benefits, AI introduces challenges that demand the attention of our profession, including some that are yet unknown. The increasing reliance on algorithm-driven tools in career guidance raises critical concerns regarding data privacy, ethical standards, and the potential for algorithmic bias. There are other social implications that require ongoing investigation as well. Therefore, it is essential that guidance practitioners, organisations, and policymakers work collaboratively to establish robust standards for transparency, fairness, and inclusivity in AI applications.

The increasing reliance on algorithm-driven tools in career guidance raises critical concerns regarding data privacy, ethical standards, and the potential for algorithmic bias.

Moreover, poor-quality AI services can distort labour market dynamics and mislead users who place their trust in these technologies, potentially resulting in grave consequences. For example, when AI systems are trained on inadequate, biased, or outdated data, they may produce predictions or recommendations that misguide people's career choices, perpetuate existing biases, or reinforce stereotypes, leading to inefficiencies and inequalities in the job market. This underscores the importance of robust quality control and data integrity in AI-driven career applications. Furthermore, AI's growing role risks exacerbating the digital divide. Without adequate digital infrastructure and AI literacy for all, people are at risk of being excluded from learning and career opportunities, thus deepening existing inequalities. To counter this, IAEVG advocates the importance of digital equity—ensuring access to technology and the skills to use and critically evaluate it—as a fundamental component of modern career, educational, and vocational guidance, including career development, especially for those in rural and low-income areas.

The IAEVG advocates the development of ethical guidelines that prioritise client rights and autonomy while upholding the integrity of career,

educational, and vocational guidance, including career development. These guidelines should ensure that AI applications respect individuals' privacy, prevent discriminatory outcomes, and foster socially just practices that align with our association's values.

Ensuring that AI serves as a facilitator of opportunity rather than as a barrier.

Transparency in how AI operates is another important ethical consideration. As AI technologies grow more sophisticated, it is vital that clients and practitioners understand how these systems arrive at recommendations or decisions. To this end, we emphasise the importance of practitioners being knowledgeable about AI systems to mitigate bias risks and support client autonomy, ensuring that AI serves as a facilitator of opportunity rather than as a barrier. Additionally, practitioners must remain vigilant in evaluating AI recommendations, critically assessing their quality, and advocating improvements when needed.

The Need for Continuous Professional Development in AI

As AI reshapes the competencies required in our field, the IAEVG emphasises the need for continuous professional development. Practitioners must be equipped not only with traditional skills but also with new competencies to integrate digital technology and AI effectively and ethically into their guidance practices. Training in AI literacy, ethical technology use, and data interpretation is essential for guidance practitioners to use these tools thoughtfully while remaining aware of their limitations.

The rapidly growing use of AI and other digital technologies globally is making the work of guidance practitioners still more challenging. In that context, it has become more urgent than ever to establish minimum and qualifications standards that ensure standardised, high-quality services throughout the field. Besides these foundational standards, specialised continuous training—particularly in AI literacy and digital competencies—will be essential for practitioners to integrate AI responsibly and ethically into their work.

Moreover, it is crucial to recognise that the increased potential of AI should not be viewed as a cost-saving alternative to face-to-face guidance. It cannot replace the essential human interaction that lies at the core of effective guidance services, nor should it be used as a rationale to reduce the resources available for personalised support. On the contrary, implementing AI effectively demands additional investments in skilled IT professionals, digital infrastructure, and support personnel to properly manage these technologies and keep the public informed. Personal guidance remains vital, especially in fostering the uniquely human skills that AI cannot replicate. We encourage partnerships among educational institutions; government bodies; relevant supra-national, international, and global organisations; and technology developers to create resources and professional development opportunities that will support this transition. Additionally, we call on public authorities to invest in digital infrastructure. Such efforts are critical in bridging the digital divide, which could otherwise exclude those without adequate access to technology, skills, or training from quality guidance.

Through continuous learning and research about AI, ethical applications, and sustained investment, we can ensure that AI serves to enhance, rather than diminish, human interaction, thus upholding our commitment to providing inclusive, high-quality career guidance services for all.

Promoting Sustainable Development

As AI plays an increasing role in career, educational, and vocational guidance, including career development, it is essential to align these advancements with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and socio-ecological transitions. The environmental impact of digital technologies, as well as the social implications of a rapidly changing labour market, must be integral to our guidance frameworks. The IAEVG supports initiatives that promote AI's role in creating sustainable careers that align with the ecological and social needs of our communities.

By embracing the benefits AI offers while addressing its challenges and remaining vigilant, active, and informed, we can continue to fulfil our mission of advocating accessible, high-quality career, educational, and vocational guidance, including career development for all.

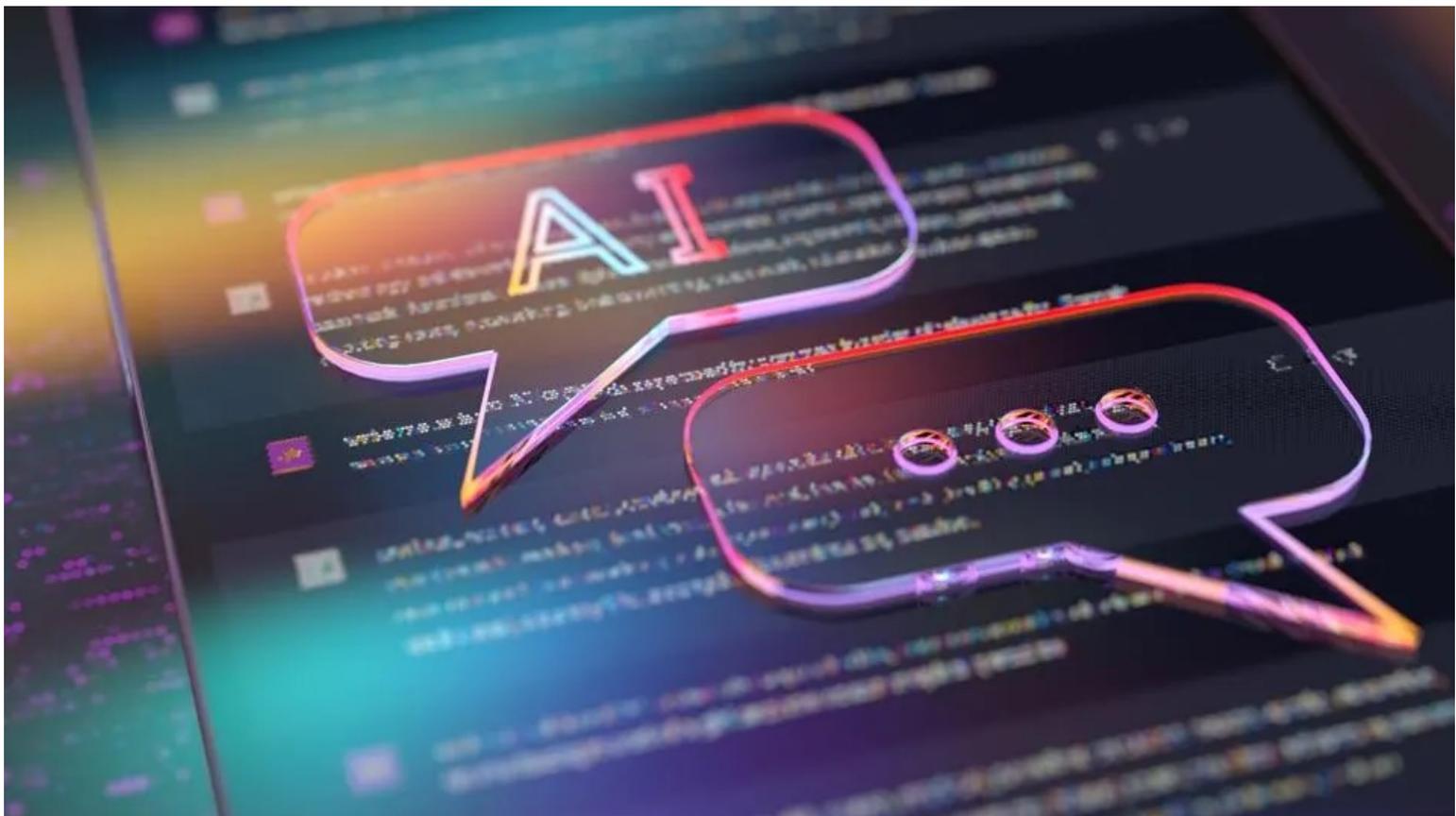
Conclusion and Call to Action

The IAEVG reaffirms its commitment to fostering a future in which AI-enhanced guidance aligns with ethical, inclusive, and sustainable practices. As we move forward, let us collectively work toward ensuring that AI enhances interoperability, quality, and systems improvement and serves as a tool for empowerment, equipping people with the knowledge, skills, and support they and society need to navigate an evolving career landscape with resilience and agency. We call on AI developers and guidance practitioners to

collaborate actively to ensure that these technologies are designed and deployed in ways that genuinely meet the needs of individuals and practitioners. By embracing the benefits AI offers while addressing its challenges and remaining vigilant, active, and informed, we can continue to fulfil our mission of advocating accessible, high-quality career, educational, and vocational guidance, including career development for all.

FURTHER READING

IAEVG Communiques and how to make most out them
<https://iaevg.com/Communiques>



FEATURED THEME: PROFESSIONALISATION AND COMPETENCE

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS

Across the world, educational, vocational and career guidance and counselling is gaining increasing recognition as a vital contributor to lifelong learning, inclusive labour markets, and sustainable social development. This recognition is driving renewed attention to the professionalisation of career guidance—and at the heart of this movement lies the development and implementation of competency frameworks.

Competency frameworks provide a shared language to describe the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective guidance practice. They support quality assurance, workforce development, professional mobility, and policy coherence, all while strengthening practitioners' identities and public trust in the profession. The contributions in this issue offer valuable insights into how different countries and regions are approaching this critical area of development:

Finland presents a nationally co-created Competency Framework for Career Professionals, structured around professionalism, client work, and systemic competence. Developed collaboratively with practitioners across sectors and piloted in training and evaluation contexts, this framework is already informing practice, curricula, and policy.

Canada shares its journey toward a national, practitioner-led certification process underpinned by a comprehensive competency framework and Code of Ethics. The work of the Canadian Career Development Foundation demonstrates how coordinated action, built from within the profession, can lead to sector-wide transformation and recognition.

Germany contributes a comparative analysis of its BeQu Competence Profile alongside recent developments in Finland, Canada, and Switzerland. This article sheds light on shared principles, differing conceptual foundations, and evolving strategies for implementation across contexts.

Together, these contributions illustrate a growing global movement: one that values quality, coherence, and collaboration in developing the career guidance profession. They show how competency frameworks can be tools for not only defining standards but also enhancing services, empowering practitioners, and connecting practice with policy.

The following contributions invite reflection on our own national contexts and encourage us to consider how the experiences of others can inform our next steps in enhancing professional competence and the quality of guidance.

PROPOSAL FOR A COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR CAREER PROFESSIONALS IN FINLAND

By Raimo Vuorinen & Jaana Kettunen

As part of Finland's national lifelong guidance project, the Finnish Institute for Educational Research at the University of Jyväskylä has prepared a proposal for the Competency framework for guidance professionals, aligned with the National Strategy for Lifelong Guidance 2020-24. Hundreds of professionals contributed, including those from education, employment services, youth services, and government bodies. In 2024, it was pilot tested in a national evaluation of qualification programs for guidance counsellors, psychologists, and related training modules.

Introduction

Since 2005 the European Union (EU) member states have acknowledged the professionalisation of career guidance services in different sectors as one of the priorities within the guidance systems and policy development. According to the Finnish National Strategy for Lifelong Guidance 2020–2023 (Valtioneuvosto, 2020), Finland has a strongly professionalised system of guidance by international standards, but the professional titles and qualifications of those working in the field vary. As a development proposal, the strategy presented the need to draw up national descriptions of the core and special competency of guidance work to improve the quality of guidance and strengthen the professionalism of the field. Guidance competency refers to the knowledge, skills, competences and attitudes required to undertake lifelong guidance roles and tasks in whichever setting career guidance is provided (ELPGN, 2015). This proposal for a national description of competencies for career professionals has been developed at the Finnish Institute for Educational Research as part of a development project on lifelong guidance which was funded by the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility and coordinated by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, and the Development and Administrative Services Centre (KEHA Centre).

Joint development process

The development of national competency descriptions is based on a literature review that examined international and national competency

descriptions for guidance work, which have proven to be relevant regardless of the context or ways in which guidance services are organised. Based on the most recent national initiatives (e.g. Australia, Canada, Germany, Norway, Scotland) and competency frameworks by international organisations (e.g. IAEVG, NCDA, APCDA, Cedefop) a draft proposal was drafted for consultation among the Finnish guidance community representatives. This draft had four elements: a) core competencies for all career professionals; b) special competences for different guidance settings; c) special expert competences needed with challenging guidance settings and d) special competences for management and development of career systems and services.

Between February 2022 and June 2023 altogether 665 guidance professionals participated in 12 workshops to reflect the proposed draft competence descriptions, including practitioners from all levels of education, public and private employment services, youth services, guidance professionals' organisations, student organisations, training units, ministries, regional and public administrations, and expert bodies. The evolving draft proposal was available online for public consultation during this joint development process. The workshops also reflected the current trends in the society and working life which have impact in the guidance systems and practices. Based on the feedback a new proposal for competency framework was constructed and pilot tested in workshops with training units and with a group of career professionals from different settings.

Competency framework for career professionals

The competency framework for career professionals consists of three main areas: professionalism, client work and systemic competency. Together these three main areas form a strong foundation for the shared competency of professionals working in different settings in lifelong guidance.

A	PROFESSIONALISM refers to activities that comply with the legislation and regulations governing the field and the ethical principles of the profession and the field.
B	CLIENT WORK refers to the ability to work professionally with clients in different situations and environments.
C	SYSTEMIC COMPETENCY refers to the ability to plan and organise guidance work as part of regional services in accordance with local needs and operating conditions.

The competency descriptions consist of 12 competency areas, which are grouped into the three main areas described above. The competency area describes the individualised competency needed in the work of a career professional now and in the future. Each competency area consists of related key competency descriptions, which ensure that the transversal competency required by each competency area is taken into account. In this description, the term 'client' describes all users of guidance services, whether individuals or groups. The competency areas (A1–C4) have been divided into more detailed smaller parts. If the career professional's work context or task includes areas requiring special expertise, they have been specified in detailed sections.

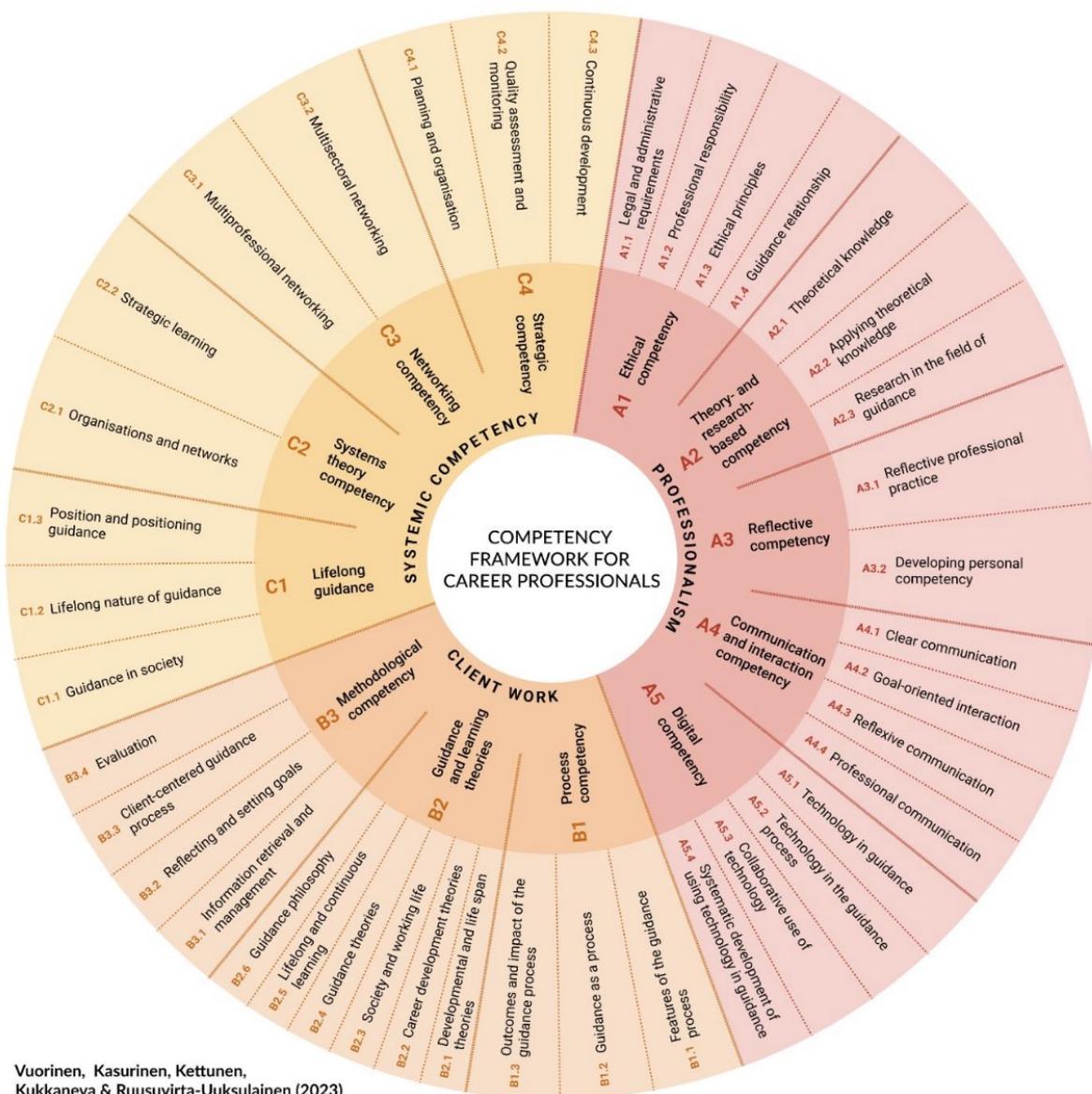


Figure 1. Competency areas for career professionals

Online tool for self-assessment for career professionals

The online assessment tool (Kettunen et al., 2023) based on the competency descriptors are designed to support guidance professionals, teams, networks, and organisations in two key areas of competency development: *self-assessment* and *planning and monitoring*. The package comprises of three separate forms: 1.) an assessment table, 2.) a competency map, and 3.) a competency development planning form. The competency assessment tool can be used to assess the level of competency against the specified competency descriptions.

The competency map provides a visual presentation of the current competency level in various competency areas. If so desired, the same competency map can be used to set competency goals. The competency development planning form provides a structure for setting goals, planning concrete development measures, and monitoring their implementation over time.

A Professionalism

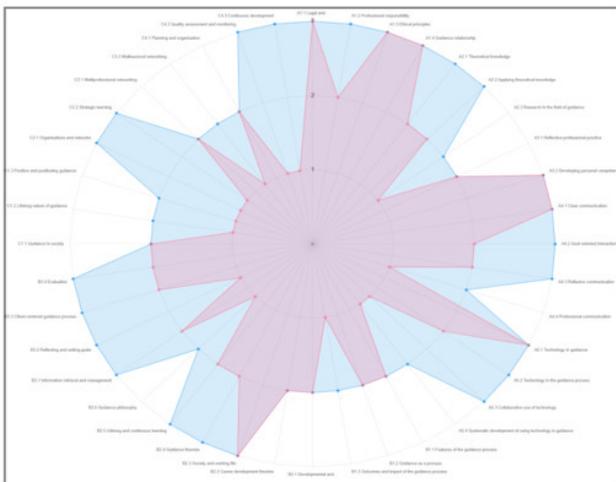
A1 Ethical competency

A1.1 ① I carry out guidance work in accordance with legislation and administrative instruction of my field.
 0 1 2 3
 Current competence: 3

A1.2 ① I am aware of the boundaries of my profession and competency and act accordingly.
 0 1 2 3
 Current competence: 2

A1.3 ① I act in accordance with the ethical principles of my field.
 0 1 2 3
 Current competence: 3

A1.4 ① In guidance relationship, I act in accordance with the ethical principles of my field.
 0 1 2 3
 Current competence: 3



Pilot testing the framework in national evaluation of the training of career professionals

In 2023-24, the framework was pilot tested in the evaluation of the structure and content of the training of career professional in Finnish and Swedish languages (Kasurinen et al., 2024). In Finland, the qualifications for guidance counsellors in comprehensive and secondary level education and psychologists are defined in legislation. The analysis covered the training of guidance counsellors provided by two universities and five universities of applied sciences in Finnish language and one university program in Swedish language. The analysis on the expected learning outcomes for psychologists was based on the competence framework constructed by the universities providing training programs for psychologists.

The analysis focused on expected learning outcomes, content of the training modules as well as practical organisation of the learning tasks described in the curricula. The aim was to identify the expected competencies acquired during the training programs. The programs were analysed to what extent the expected learning outcomes cover the competence descriptors identified in the proposal for national competency framework.

Key findings

In the training of guidance counsellors, the main focus seems to be in competences related to actual work with client groups with knowledge on guidance theories and methodologies. The priorities identified in the national lifelong guidance strategy (ethical competence, awareness of languages, culture and gender issues, social justice, prevention of social exclusion and sustainable development) are partly identified in the curricula. Digital competence, identification and acquisition of career management skills, client groups with special needs were included only in few programs. A common major gap was in evaluation and monitoring the outcomes and impact of both guidance processes and programs.

The expected competences for psychologists cover the most parts of the proposed national competency framework for career professionals but different overall structure. Strong basis in research, working methods and interaction with clients, guidance process and monitoring the outcomes of guidance process are key strengths in the programs. Less focus is on digital competences, systemic competences and links with wider societal goal of guidance, advocacy and community capacity building.

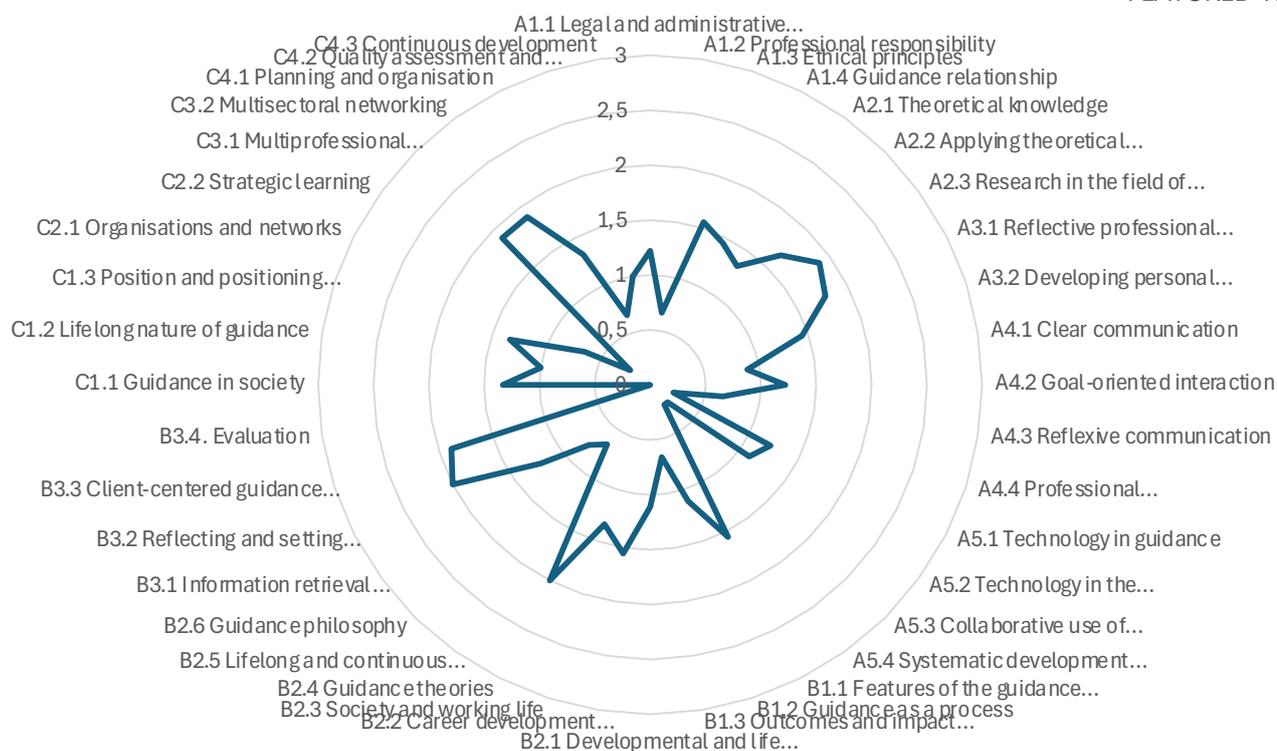


Figure 1. Summary of the levels of expected learning outcomes in the initial training programs for guidance counsellors in Finland 2023.

The validity of the national competency framework as a framework for the analysis of the curricula was tested in an in-service training program of career practitioners in 2023-24. During this pilot altogether 39 career professionals from different settings were asked to fill the competence framework assessment form (Kettunen et al., 2023). The participants were using the tool to identify their current competence and personal learning goals for them during the in-service training. The results align with the findings of the national evaluation of the training programs

- The training units should design a more explicit modular structure with more explicit interface with the sections of the national competency framework. This would help co-operation between the training units and provide a basis for a more transparent processes in recognition and validation of prior learning both from student and training unit perspective. In addition, this could lead to more explicit continuum between initial and in-service training of career professionals.
- There should be more emphasis on the lifelong and systemic nature of guidance.

Based on the findings of the evaluation of the structure and content of the training of career professional in Finnish and Swedish languages , the following recommendations were presented:

- The learning outcomes of the programs should cover the level 1 in all the competence areas identified in the national framework.
- More emphasis is needed on the current gaps on digital competence, evaluation and development of the services, systemic competence and continuous improvement of the services.
- More emphasis is needed on overall competence-based approach in the curricula design.

Competency framework as a sustainable basis for competency assessment and development

The competency framework for career professionals provides several opportunities for utilisation. The competency framework can be used to examine both professional qualification requirements and competency in different tasks of guidance. A guidance professional does not need to have deep knowledge of all areas of expertise. Combinations of different competency areas form the required specific competency for career professionals and organisations, which can be developed as a whole or deepened for some competency areas, if necessary. This competency framework for career professionals can be utilised, for example, as follows:

- **Competency assessment:** As part of the guidance work, career professionals can use the competency framework to assess their strengths and development needs. By comparing one's competency with the learning outcomes defined in the framework, it is possible to identify the necessary development areas. The career professional can examine their competency with the assessment forms which have been produced in accordance with the competency framework (Kettunen et al., 2023).
- **Planning the training programmes:** The competency framework can be used in planning initial and in-service training and development measures in the field of guidance.
- **Development of the career professionals' own competency:** The career professionals identify the competency areas which they need to develop. They seek appropriate further training to strengthen their competency.
- **Clarifying the job description:** The competency framework helps to clarify the career professional's job description and role in the guidance field. It helps to define expectations and responsibilities in different positions, which makes the guidance work more efficient and transparent. Clear job descriptions also help avoid ambiguities and conflicts in the workplace.
- **Comparison and benchmarking:** The National Competency Framework for Career Professionals can be used in making comparisons with other career professionals. A common language and understanding of competency requirements promote cooperation and benchmarking. This can help career professionals compare their competencies and skills with other professionals in the field and learn best practices.
- **Improving client services:** The competency framework helps improve client service skills and guidance for the clients. When the career professional knows what skills and competencies the clients expect, they can focus on meeting these needs. Clients can also better assess the appropriateness of services for their own needs.
- **Improving the quality and effectiveness of guidance:** Organisers and funders of guidance services can utilise competency framework in defining job descriptions for guidance workers, recruiting professionals, as procurement criteria in outsourced services, and in assessing the quality and effectiveness of services.

In summary, the National Competency Framework for Career Professionals is a valuable tool for those working in the field of guidance. It helps define qualification requirements, improve services, and support skills development. Its use promotes the competency of career professionals and higher quality and more effective guidance for clients.



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CANADA'S NATIONAL COMPETENCY-BASED CERTIFICATION FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS

by Sareena Hopkins & Philip Mondor

In Canada, the career development field has been working to improve its visibility, extend its reach, demonstrate its impact and, ultimately, futureproof the sector. These efforts have been largely grassroots, fuelled by career development professionals (CDPs) committed to not only their own practice, but to the broader betterment of practice and impact across the profession. One significant example of action fuelled from within the sector has been Canada's development of a professional competency framework, code of ethics, national standard, and its movement toward a national competency-based certification.

History

Canada was the first country in the world to articulate the competencies needed for ethical and effective career development practice. Following extensive consultation from 1996 to 2000, the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) launched the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners (S&Gs) in early 2001, mapping out the professional competencies and ethical framework to support quality career service delivery. The (S&Gs) were the sector's proactive strategy to define its own standard of excellence and demonstrate that career services are vital and call for a complex and sophisticated constellation of professional competencies.

A Reimagined Approach

Over the next 25 years, as the labour market and practice changed, the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) remained the informal "home" of the S&Gs and joined other volunteers who did their best to update the framework off the sides of their desks. In 2018, CCDF was invited to submit a proposal to the Government of Canada to do a fulsome reimagining of the S&Gs and to create and test assessment tools to support a national competency-based certification process. Fueled by over 5,000 hours of volunteer contribution, over 500 diverse CDPs and subject-matter experts from across Canada co-conceived, developed, tested, revised, tested again, and validated a new [Competency Framework](#), [Code of Ethics](#), [standard for practice](#) and [approach to national certification](#). In addition, a [new definition of a CDP](#), [National Competency Profile](#), [competency self-assessment tool](#), and supporting micro-credentials were developed.



The Competency Framework

The Framework contains a comprehensive library of competencies associated with quality career development practice. The framework takes into account varying types of work environments, levels of complexity, and job types. Guided by several essential requirements, the overall aim was to develop a framework that was:

- practical and accessible, using familiar terms understood by career development practitioners
- future-oriented and flexible, containing competencies that are critical to future success, expectations or challenges
- cost-effective and sustainable, designed to be easily maintained
- benchmarked against global practice and reflecting world views
- scalable and able to integrate tools and resources to support a broad range of practice, for individuals and for institutions
- led by expert practitioners and with significant and meaningful interest holder engagement
- inclusive of competencies for individual efforts and for work functions that require team collaboration

The Framework is structured around four key categories, each containing a series of competency areas:

1. **Professional Practice:** Competencies that are foundational to the delivery of most any human service, including competency areas such as professional responsibility, ethical decision-making, the client-practitioner relationship, diversity and inclusion, communication and digital competence.
2. **CDP Characteristic:** Competencies that are distinct and core to career development practice. Competency areas in this category include foundational knowledge and applied theories, the career development process, learning and job readiness, work search strategies, referrals, and tailored services for target populations.
3. **CDP Advanced:** Competencies for specialized career services, including the use of technology to deliver services, group facilitation, working with LMI and assessment and evaluation.
4. **Outreach & Leadership:** Competencies beyond the traditional delivery of services, including areas such as employer outreach, community capacity building, policy and advocacy, and sectoral leadership.

There are over 100 competencies delineated within the Framework; each competency element contains detailed information, including.

- A Purpose/Context statement, providing the rationale for the relevance of the competency to career development practitioners. The statement defines the limited scope or special conditions which apply, when needed.
- Effective Performance explicitly describes what is expected of a competent practitioner, who can perform consistently, in the expected range of contexts with the intended level of proficiency, i.e. at the expected level of performance.
- Knowledge statements describe what a competent practitioner must know in order to perform consistently to the required standard. Knowledge statements factor in context, such as the intended pace, conditions or variables that may apply.
- Variables describe the range of contexts in which career development practitioners are expected to perform proficiently to the defined standard. Variables may define requirements or conditions that apply only in certain contexts or unique circumstances.
- The Glossary contains a list of terms, concepts,

or acronyms affiliated with the competency element.

Each competency element also contains a summary of six common context ratings scales: the criticality or risk factor associated with the competency; the frequency in which the skill/task is performed or manifests; the level of complexity or difficulty associated with performing the competency; required degree of autonomy (e.g. individual, in a group); the estimated time and conditions necessary to become proficient in the skill or task; and identification of underpinning or supporting competency elements.

National Certification

For over two decades, every provincial career development association met regularly to agree on the best approach to certification. Building from the Competency Framework and Code of Ethics, the sector chose a competency-based approach to certification to enhance inclusivity and adaptability in response to evolving labour market needs. CCDF collaborated with an occupational standards expert (Emerit) and CDPs from across the country. A Technical Working Group created competency-based assessment tools and processes, including multiple-choice exam questions and scenario-based structured interview questions.

A National Certification Advisory Committee (NCAC) was established with members from diverse regions of Canada, selected through an application process and rigorous criteria to ensure a wide range of perspectives, experiences and competencies. The Nova Scotia Career Development Association (NSCDA), with support from their provincial government, formed a dedicated Career Certification team to administer a bilingual national certification, working closely with the NCAC and CCDF. The aim is for the NCAC to transition from their current advisory role to full governance in the future.

Over the summer of 2024, the full national certification program was tested with a group of CDPs representing the diversity of the sector. The response to the volunteer call for this pilot was



astounding, enabling the Career Certification team to conduct a robust test of the entire process. The data from the pilot has been analysed and adjustments made to ensure that every assessment item is fair and evaluates what is intended. The goal is to ensure the process for the candidates is welcoming, clear and inclusive.

The Methodology

Across this whole process, one of the most significant advancements in this reimagining was the decision to work with occupational standards experts. This brought robust methodologies and a level of rigour to this work that was unprecedented in the sector.

Methodology to Develop the Framework

The Framework was created using a rigorous social research model grounded in defined principles and using primary and secondary data sources. A core tenant of the methodology was the extensive consultation with subject matter experts (SMEs). A draft set of competencies were created based on a literature review of current norms. The global review captured prevailing and recommended practices included in curriculum, regulations, company policies, training, occupational standards, and certifications. The research design considered contingent and environmental factors and accounted for the influence of these factors on future needs:

- Political factors, e.g. regulations, legal issues, trade restrictions, labour mobility legislation
- Economic variables, e.g. economic growth, employment/unemployment rates
- Social policies, e.g. mobility of workers, emphasis on safety and security or improved ecological practices
- Demographic trends, e.g. age, levels of education

A hybrid methodology was used to develop and validate the Framework, drawing from several recognized standards-setting processes, including the Functional Analysis Model, an adapted DACUM (Develop a Curriculum) model, the Competency Assessment Profile model (CAPS) and the Critical Incidence approach. The overall process was guided by a quality assurance process. The core competency development and validation were situated in intensive work with SMEs from across Canada to define the field of practice (e.g. common elements, and distinct areas for each stream), set the parameters of the competency profile, and determined the content by adapting the draft competencies based on careful exploration and through consensus or

shared perception of legitimacy. The SMEs ensured that the complete scope of the field was well documented, and that the competencies contained the right level of specificity and context. A National Interest Holder Committee ratified the Framework, confirming that the project objectives, principles and quality assurance requirements set out at the onset had been met.

Methodology to Develop the Approach to National Certification

SMEs with a minimum of five years of experience were nominated by peers for their exemplary practice or leadership in the field to form the core development team. The group represented Canada's diversity and the range of delivery settings/people served by the sector. Guided by a psychometrician, SMEs determined the RPL program structure that was informed by the CDP Competency Framework. They determined that the Certified Career Development Professional (CCDP) designation would be awarded to candidates with a minimum number of years of qualified experience who pass a rigorous assessment of their knowledge of the domain (i.e. a written multiple-choice exam) and demonstrate their ability to proficiently apply the knowledge (i.e. a performance evaluation).

The multiple-choice exam is comprised of case-based and independent questions that test a variety of realistic scenarios encountered in day-to-day practice. The multiple-choice questions were developed to assess one of three cognitive ability levels derived from Bloom's taxonomy: knowledge/comprehension, application/analysis, and critical thinking/problem solving. Subject matter experts contributed to the development and validation of the bank of multiple-choice test questions used to generate different forms of the test. Multiple teams of item writers were trained to develop questions using psychometric guidelines, which culminated in a series of facilitated workshops where they refined and sanctioned the questions ready for pilot testing.

In the initial pilot testing of the exam, results for each test question looked at:

- Difficulty level (p): indicates how many candidates answered the question correctly. Ideally the questions should not be too difficult ($p < .35$) or too easy ($p > .95$).
- Point biserial index (Rpbis): a measure of discrimination between high and low performers on the overall exam. At a minimum, it should be positive, with a higher number indicating a better discrimination.

- Distribution by option: looks at how candidate responded to the distractors. Any option that is selected more frequently than the correct answer should be investigated. Also, if an option is not selected, it should be revised to be more plausible.

Using the data from the pilots, validation of the multiple-choice test questions started with SMEs trained to review a series of assigned questions and to verify that each question: was clear, with no ambiguity; was free of inherent bias; was meaningful and relevant to the CDP; and had only one correct or clearly best answer. Final validation of the test questions and the setting of the pass mark (using a Modified Angoff procedure) was achieved through a series of ten videoconference sessions. In addition to the multiple-choice exam, the approach includes a performance assessment strategy comprised of a structured interview where candidates are asked behavioural and situational questions for each competency area being assessed. It was similarly rigorously tested and validated.

The Why

This initiative has been all about defining and strengthening our practice to secure our stability and impact as a profession. The sector chose to proceed with a competency-based approach to certification to enable us to be more inclusive and nimbler in our capacity to adjust to emergent labour market realities. The potential benefits of this approach to national certification are multi-faceted.

Benefits of certification for the profession

- Offers a touchstone to guide ethical and effective practice.
- Raises the bar for the profession.
- Demonstrates to employers/funders, policymakers and the public that our scope of practice is unique and grounded in professional excellence.
- Provides evidence that CDPs merit a professional level of pay and stable funding.

Benefits of certification for CDPs

- Provides confirmation of competence and offers a formal process for recognition of professional development and growth.
- Is a vehicle to support access to job opportunities and professional growth.
- Sets CDPs apart as certified professionals, with demonstrated expertise.
- Supports career mobility for CDPs across provinces and territories. Benefits of certification for our employers & funders

- Sets a consistent standard and measure of quality assurance and accountability.
- Offers a mechanism to identify employees with leadership potential.
- Provides a pathway to guide training and professional development plans. Benefits of certification for the public we serve
- Defines a standard of excellence the public can rightfully expect.
- Affords consumers the opportunity to make informed decisions about services they seek.
- Respects everyone's right to accountability and transparency in service delivery.

The Competency Framework, Code of Ethics and National Certification are voluntary standards to which the sector has chosen to hold itself. It has been created by the sector, in part, to demonstrate to sectoral employers, funders, customers, and the broader public the complex constellation of competencies required to do this vitally important work. We hope it shines a spotlight on the scope of career practice and its critical impact on the socio-economic health of individuals, families, communities, and nations. Career development work matters, and this initiative is a visible signpost that the sector is committed to doing it with the utmost excellence.

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COMPARISON OF DEVELOPMENTS, THE GERMAN COMPETENCE MODEL IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES

by Peter Weber

Between 2009 and 2014, the National Forum for Guidance in Germany developed a competence profile for guidance (education, career and employment) in a broad-based participation process and introduced it into the specialist policy debate. In a pilot project, the competences and parallel quality standards were tested in more than 50 guidance organisations. The competence profile is widely used in the field of counselling. However, there is as yet no binding regulation on the use of these competences. Ten years after the development of the first version of the competence profile, the National Forum for Counselling has now decided to review whether the profile is still up to date and whether additions or extensions should be made to selected topics such as digitalisation or migration. As a first step, we compared the previous skills profile with other current profiles.

Presentation and analysis of competence profiles

In the following presentation of the BeQu competence profile (Schiersmann, Pettersen, Weber, 2017), several other competence profiles from various national and international contexts are used for comparison. This essentially pursues two objectives. Firstly, the comparison allows differences and similarities between the various competence profiles to be identified on the basis of criteria. Secondly, the aim is to analyse whether the comparison can identify new findings about the state of research and development in the international context that should also be used for the discussion in Germany.

The selection criteria were the limitation of the field of counselling (work-related counselling) and a certain degree of topicality of the publications used. The national and international competence profiles used at the time were documented in the BeQu Competence Profile (Schiersmann, Pettersen, Weber, 2017) (p. 301f).

All of the examples used here are more recent and were not yet the basis of the BeQu profile at the time. The following profiles were analysed:

- BeQu-Profile (Schiersmann, Pettersen, Weber, 2017): Competence profile for counsellors in education, occupation and employment.
- ECVision (2015): Supervision and coaching in Europe, concepts and competences.
- Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) (2021). The Pan-Canadian Competency Framework for Career Development Professionals

- Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) (2023). Qualification profile for vocational, academic and career counsellors
- Finnish Institute for Educational Research [FIER] (Vuorinen, Kasurinen, Kettunen et al., 2024): A proposal for a National Competency Framework for Career Professionals

The presentation is not concerned with a detailed analysis of the content of the competences described in each case, but rather with a comparison based on central aspects of competence profiles for counselling:

- Underlying understanding of competence
- Theoretical basis for building the
- Development process and binding nature of the competence profile
- Target group and counselling services
- Content focus and special features of the profile
- Importance of knowledge in the competence profile
- Testing of the competence profile (e.g. accompanying research)
- Provision of recording instruments

Underlying understanding of competence

The BeQu model formulates a performance-orientated approach. In this model, competences are concretised at the action level, taking resources into account. Cognitive and motivational resources are understood as necessary for the development and application of competences. Together with the named resources, the performance-oriented descriptions enable observation and self-reflection (BeQu, 2017, p. 96). All the evaluated profiles use the concept of competence; in some cases, this is justified by the need for professionalisation in the field of counselling and the

difficulty of comparing initial qualifications (FIER, 2024; ECVision, 2015). With the exception of the BeQu model, however, all documents lack a more detailed, explicit discussion of the concept of competence. ECVision is based on the EQF understanding of competence (knowledge, skills), but supplements this with the perspective of "performance". The performance orientation is also described in other of the analysed profiles, for example in the Canadian profile: "The Competency Framework details and describes effective performance, knowledge, understanding, and abilities of professionals in the career development sector" (CCDF, p. 2). Switzerland alternatively uses the term "action competence" (SERI, 2023, p. 3). The Finnish profile deals briefly with a definition of competence. Due to the lack of clarification on the concept of competence, the models mentioned do not address how the named resources relate to the ability to act or performance.

Theoretical basis for the structure of the competence profile

The theoretical basis for the structure of the BeQu competence profile is a systemic model of counselling. "The systemic model refers to the fact that the interaction of different systems plays a role in counselling, namely the person seeking advice, the counsellor, the counselling system, organisations and society as the context for the counselling services. Counselling competence requires a professional approach to the various requirements for the design of counselling that arise from the individual systems and their interaction" (BeQu, 2017, p. 19).



The competence groups (system-wide competences, process competences, organisational competences, society-related competences) are derived from this basis. A comparable model-based or theoretical justification of the competence profile can only be found more clearly in Finland and in the ECVision profile; in the others it is at best rudimentary. A theoretical construct can best be seen in the Finnish 3-level model ("Professionalism", "Client-Work" and "Systemic Competence"). These core terms are each defined (FIER, 2024a, p. 13, p. 35 and p. 56) and it is argued that counselling can be professionalised by focusing on these aspects (counsellor, client, system). The ECVision profile names "coaching" and "supervision" as key concepts (ECVision, 2015, p. 50f). Building on this, the profile is internally differentiated into "Professional identity" and "Professional behaviour". The structure of the Canadian profile provides indications of several conceptual delimitations. In the first part (competences 1-9), those competences are named that are referred to as "professional practice" as a general basis, which can also claim validity for other fields of activity in counselling (comparable to the system-wide competences in the BeQu model). Building on this, specific competences for

individual counselling, for counselling in networks and companies and finally for the management of counselling are described.

Development process and the binding nature of the competence profile

The development of the BeQu competence profile was part of a "coordination process" of the National Forum for Guidance (nfb) involving political and professional experts in several working groups as well as testing with more than 50 provider organisations (BeQu 2017) and the inclusion of many guidance practitioners in the testing of the data collection instruments (BeQu 2017). All profiles included are based on comparable processes. They are characterised by the involvement of various stakeholder groups, in particular practitioners, associations and provider organisations, the inclusion of (national or international) experts and the iterative development of results. However, there are differences in the degree of commitment. The Swiss profile is the most binding. Here, the competence profile is used as the basic framework for the mandatory review of competences upon completion of one of the qualification programmes (SERI, 2023). This is used for the admission of career counsellors to the occupational

field. The examination is carried out by the training providers on the basis of the competence profile (SERI, 2023b). Finland has an indication of possible binding force in that profile is part of a national strategy for (vocational) guidance supported by the ministries (labour, education) and the ministries - at least in their area of activity - can use the profile as a basis. The Canadian profile has been developed from within the profession. It originates from a national counselling association and can claim to be binding for its members as well as for their qualification and further training. The ECVision profile also has professional relevance for the stakeholders involved, although in the field of supervision and coaching these only represent some of the professional associations and training programmes. The NICE standards only serve as reference points for universities that offer degree programmes in the field of counselling and have no formal validity. There is a further difference in the accompanying research with regard to application. With the exception of the BeQu model (until publication), none of the development projects have integrated the trialling of the results in a practical context or announced such trialling and accompanying research.

Target group and counselling services

The BeQu model is explicitly aimed at educational and work-related guidance. Even if the primary interest in the context of its development was focused on person-related guidance, the model can also claim relevance for guidance work in an organisational context (e.g. qualification guidance, organisational guidance). Here there are consistent overlaps with the other selected models. The target group is mostly individuals and their goals in relation to educational, vocational or career issues or issues relating to the world of work (FIE, CH, Canada). Even if there are conceptual differences (Canada and Switzerland explicitly refer to career counselling and career guidance), a strong parallelism can be seen here. The models mentioned are initially aimed at counsellors in public counselling services, although reference is also always made to the usability of the competence profile in a private sector context. The ECVision profile is aimed at a specific field of counselling in the context of supervision and coaching. While the former models focus on career choice and career development issues, the ECVision profile is aimed more at issues that are formulated within the profession (as a professional, as a manager). In addition to individual formats, group formats (e.g. for professional or career orientation) are usually also addressed.

Content focus and special features

In comparison, it can be seen that there are focal points that play a role in all profiles. All profiles contain competence descriptions that refer to the professionalism of counselling and name ethics and a scientific foundation as important. All models also describe process competences in counselling, even if there are differences in the understanding of counselling or processes and the Swiss model, for example, also addresses aspects of teaching. Commonalities can be found, for example, in the clarification of the assignment and concerns as a starting point for counselling. Aspects of relationship building and communicative competences are also clearly described in all models. Organisational skills are described in all models, albeit with different emphases (e.g. leadership, organisational development, networking, quality). References and references to the social embedding and thus also political framework conditions are found in most profiles, particularly explicitly in the BeQu model and the Finnish profile, in which the systemic idea is emphasised. Differences result from the emphasis placed on content. For example, the profiles from Canada and Switzerland particularly emphasise the focus on career and career development. The ECVision profile emphasises the application fields of supervision and coaching.

Other special features include the focus on counselling formats, with the Finnish and Canadian models focusing also on digital counselling. In the Swiss model, the implementation of educational events (e.g. vocational and career guidance and the promotion of professional biographical skills) is part of the model (SERI, p. 4). The Canadian and Swiss models specifically address aspects of counsellors' health and self-care. The Canadian model describes competences for cooperation with employers ("Employer Outreach and Relations") (CCDF, 6.1)

Importance of knowledge in the competence profile

The development of the BeQu model is based on a concept of competence that understands cognitive resources as the knowledge of the counsellor as a central resource. This applies to all competences, i.e. also to those that focus, for example, on the process design of counselling or system-wide competences (e.g. ethical competence or networking competence). The respective knowledge resources are named along all competences. These descriptions include theoretical and methodological knowledge, pedagogical and psychological knowledge, counselling field-specific and legal knowledge that can be cognitively accessed and updated in complex situations (BeQu 2017).

ECVision's profile describes the "integration of theory and practice" as a separate competence (p. 91). Where the profile explicitly refers to knowledge, the focus is mainly on knowledge about organisations and organisational analysis (ECVision 2015, p. 27 and p. 96). Depending on the definition of coaching and supervision, less importance is attached to a field-related knowledge base. Knowledge components are defined in the competence profile in each case but mainly refer to counselling processes (from p. 99), counselling approaches and psychological knowledge, communication and learning theories, methods or guidelines of the associations (from p. 90). Social issues are addressed as "general developments" (p. 95). Greater attention is paid to organisational knowledge (p. 96). Theories of leadership and management as well as the sociology of work are mentioned.

In the Swiss model, mainly and extensively action-related competence formulations are used without explicitly naming the relevant knowledge in each case. The individual competences are preceded by a reference to the importance of knowledge across the board, whereby knowledge is addressed both in relation to the context and in relation to the design of the counselling process: "The breadth of professional practice of BSL counsellors requires scientifically sound knowledge of basic psychological, orientation and application knowledge and sound knowledge of the labour market, social security law, education and vocational training systems. BSL counsellors have multi-layered counselling, test-diagnostic and methodological-didactic skills, combined with skills in the use of recognised, psychologically sound methods, models and approaches" (SERI, p. 2).

In the Canadian profile, knowledge relating to "careers" is particularly emphasised as "Foundational Knowledge and Applied Theories". Otherwise, the respective knowledge base is addressed in all competences. The Finnish profile also addresses knowledge across all competences. In the section on professionalism, knowledge is described as the core. What is required is "Knowledge of key research, theoretical knowledge and concepts in the field of guidance and the ability to apply them in guidance work" (FIER 2024a, p.19f.).

Testing of the competence profile

The profiles were also compared in terms of whether a trial or accompanying research was carried out



and documented as part of the development. The BeQu profile was the result of a lengthy and extensive development and coordination process. In this process, the competences were initially developed with the involvement of a group of experts and discussed with practitioners in a large number of workshops and events to ensure comprehensibility and acceptance (Schiersmann, et al., 2017). The individual instruments for recording competences were developed on the basis of real-life interviews and tested and further developed with around 50 advisors (BeQu 2017).

The other competence profiles provide little concrete information regarding their testing. ECVision profile refers to existing research that was used to develop the model (ECVision, p. 24-46). The Swiss model is a further development of an existing model and it can be assumed that there is a lot of experience with the earlier version among training providers and practitioners. It is not clear from the documents whether there is a scientific review.

The Finnish skills profile was developed on behalf of the ministries (labour, education) and is to be implemented by them. Its validation was integrated with practical testing, conducted as part of an in-service training program for career practitioners during 2023–2024. The development is based on a literature study. The formulations were developed in wide collaboration with experts and practitioners (FIE, 2024a, p. 7). There is a separate research report with detailed information on the whole development process (Vuorinen, Kasurinen, Kettunen, et al., 2023).

Provision of recording instruments

In the BeQu concept, a whole series of instruments for skills assessment were published in a separate

publication, which were previously tested with a large number of counsellors. The primary aim is to address the need for professionalisation in the field of counselling. Various scenarios for using the instruments are described for this purpose (BeQu 2017, p. 28). A similar approach to the skills profiles included can only be found in Finland. Parallel to the competence profile, there is a second publication and an online tool that offers three instruments for competence assessment and reflection (FIER, 2024b). "In addition to competency descriptions, we have developed competency assessment forms (...). With the help of assessment forms, career professionals and organisations can concretely assess their guidance competency in relation to the competency descriptions drawn up" (FIER, 2024a, p. 8). These instruments have been tested in an in-service training program of career practitioners. Compared to the BeQu model, these instruments can be categorised at the level of self-assessment. All other profiles at best provide indications of the need for or the possibilities of using the competence profile as a reference for the counsellors to compare their own competences. The ECVision competence profiles, the Canadian model and the Swiss model are also aimed more at training and further education programmes, for example for analysing or developing curricula or study programmes and as a framework to which national standards, for example, should be oriented (ECVision, NICE Standards). ECVision provides a checklist for education providers for this purpose. In this respect, the Swiss model is the most elaborate, as it describes concrete, observable, measurable and assessable performance criteria and classifies these into levels (SERI, 2023b, p. 1). Building on this, education providers in Switzerland are approved in a recognition procedure and the "(...) education providers specify in the recognition procedure or re-recognition procedure with a promotion and examination regulation in which form and when the competences are assessed" (ibid. p. 2).

Preliminary summary:

- The compared competence profiles show relevant similarities with regard to the understanding of the content of professional counselling. In most models, knowledge is differentiated as the basis for the individual competences.
- Another common feature is that participation processes were carried out with the involvement of experts and practitioners in each case.
- Many models lack an explicit discussion of the concept of competence. Although performance or act is (almost) always mentioned, the link to the resources described is missing or remains unclear.

- With the exception of the BeQu model, not much empirical accompanying research was carried out - as far as could be ascertained on the basis of these documents.
- Instruments for skills monitoring or reflection are only available in two of the models (BeQu and FIER), in other models the monitoring is linked to the training and related tests (CCDF).
- Only the Swiss profile is clearly binding. In other cases, this may be regulated by the professional organisations (ECVision, CCDF) or regulated within the sphere of influence of the ministries (FIER).

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ARTICLES FROM IJEVG

By Sachin Kumar

The International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IJEVG), Vol 24, Issue 2, published in August 2024, presents research addressing key issues in educational and vocational guidance across diverse global contexts. This issue features twelve studies exploring the intersection of career development, employability, and social factors, offering practitioners valuable insights into the evolving landscape of career guidance. The present article synthesizes my insights from the latest issue, highlighting key lessons for career guidance professionals.



Several articles in this Issue tackle discrimination in vocational contexts. A study from Switzerland examines hegemonic masculinity and sexism in male-dominated vocational schools, revealing heightened discrimination against both heterosexual females and LGBTQ students. These findings underscore the urgent need for interventions aimed at fostering inclusivity. Similarly, research on career counsellors in Finland and Sweden highlights challenges faced when working with migrant students, indicating that societal pressures can limit counsellors' professional agency. Recognizing the unique needs of migrants is essential for effective support.

A significant focus of this issue is on employability and its determinants. A study in Vietnam investigates employer expectations in economically disadvantaged regions, identifying

key attributes such as resilience, empathy, and self-learning. These findings advocate for tailored career guidance and educational reforms to better prepare graduates for the local labour market. Conversely, a comprehensive study in China explores perceived employability among university students, identifying factors like social capital and career planning that positively influence employability perceptions. Enhancing students' confidence in labour market conditions can improve both academic and life satisfaction.

Multiple studies examine career adaptability, particularly among vulnerable populations. A longitudinal study in Hong Kong focuses on students with special educational needs (SEN), revealing that social connectedness and meaning in life predict career adaptability and self-efficacy. This suggests that interventions enhancing these aspects can effectively support SEN students. Another study from Lebanon

evaluates the psychometric properties of the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS), supporting its reliability and applicability in career counselling.

Articles reflecting on students' experiences in career education provide valuable insights into pedagogical practices. A study from Norway highlights the importance of structured reflections in career education, revealing that better preparation and follow-up support significantly enhance students' understanding of their career choices. This suggests a need for educational frameworks that bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical application.

The transition from education to career is another critical area addressed in this volume. Research involving elite athletes in Canada emphasizes the role of supportive environments in facilitating successful career transitions post-sport. This study highlights the necessity of resources beyond individual counselling, showcasing the impact of community and familial support in navigating these transitions. Additionally, a study on project management career choices uncovers the interplay between contextual support, personal mastery, and self-efficacy in shaping students' career interests, underscoring the importance of educational and industry collaboration to promote awareness of project management as a viable career path.

The issue also features research on academic self-efficacy among engineering undergraduates in Turkey. The findings indicate that higher self-efficacy correlates with greater academic satisfaction through enhanced career optimism. This suggests that fostering self-efficacy within educational settings can lead to better decision-making regarding career paths. Furthermore, an evaluation of career lists generated by interest inventories reveals that the quality of these lists is influenced by the similarity among occupations and optimal list lengths, enhancing the quality of career counselling by refining the tools available to students.

Lessons for Career Guidance Professionals

Now, let's examine the implications of these studies for career guidance professionals. The issue addresses the needs of diverse student populations and enhances their career development pathways. Career counsellors should actively recognize and address the impact of gender-based and sexual orientation-based discrimination on students' career trajectories.

Interventions must be developed to create supportive environments for female and LGBTQ+ students, focusing on deconstructing traditional masculinity and promoting diversity. Additionally, providing educational resources and training for educators will raise awareness about discrimination and equip them to foster inclusive climates.

Guidance professionals should prioritize the development of local contextual attributes such as adaptability, resilience, and empathy alongside generic professional skills. This involves facilitating connections between educational institutions and local employers to ensure that career support services align with the dynamic demands of the labor market. Engaging students in community-based activities will further enhance their employability by fostering context-specific work capabilities and promoting local engagement.

Incorporating vocational values into the counselling process is essential, as these values significantly influence career choices and satisfaction. Tools like the Vocational Values Scale - Student Form (VVS-S) can help clients clarify and prioritize their values in decision-making. A lifespan approach to career guidance is crucial, particularly for students with SEN. Encouraging social connectedness and discussions on personal goals will foster meaning in life, enhancing career adaptability and self-efficacy.

To deepen students' understanding and engagement with their career paths, counsellors should emphasize systematic preparation and reflection around career learning activities. Utilizing community resources and role models will provide diverse perspectives on career options and challenge prevailing stereotypes. Adopting a holistic approach that shifts the focus from merely making a career choice to exploring multiple potential futures will help students develop self-perception and motivation.

As career transitions become increasingly complex, early support is crucial, especially for athletes navigating their identities beyond sports. Collaborating with coaches and sports organizations to create enabling environments will empower athletes to pursue educational and professional opportunities. Individualized guidance tailored to the unique constraints faced by athletes can facilitate informed decision-making and enhance their career adaptability. Fostering career adaptability is vital for navigating transitions and constructing personalized career paths. Career guidance practices should be culturally sensitive, reflecting local socio-economic contexts, especially in volatile environments. Implementing validated assessment tools, such as the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS), can effectively measure and

enhance clients' adaptability and resilience. Counselling approaches must also be adapted to meet the unique needs of migrant students. Awareness of societal influences that shape counselling agendas is essential to ensure the focus remains on individual aspirations. Empowering students to take an active role in their career planning fosters resilience and adaptability in their decision-making processes.

Furthermore, encouraging students to take initiative in developing soft skills and obtaining professional certifications will enhance their employability. Establishing connections with alumni can provide current students with insights into job-seeking experiences, improving their perceived employability. Facilitating partnerships with employers to create internship opportunities will allow students to gain practical experience, thereby bolstering their career readiness. To support this process, developing students' academic and career decision-making self-efficacy is crucial for building confidence in making career choices. Promoting a positive outlook on career prospects significantly influences satisfaction with academic majors and future careers. Tailored guidance that considers the cultural context of students' decisions will support their career journeys, especially in collectivist societies.

In light of these considerations, career counsellors should emphasize the importance of high-quality career lists, as they significantly impact decision-making processes and client satisfaction. Utilizing technology, such as

self-help Internet-based career planning systems, can monitor and assess the quality of recommended occupations. Counsellors should guide clients in refining their lists for compatibility with their attributes, ensuring a manageable number of options for effective exploration.

Finally, enhancing access to comprehensive career information will help individuals align their self-view with potential career options, improving their self-efficacy. Recognizing the importance of family support in career decision-making, especially in collectivist cultures, is vital. Engaging parents in the guidance process can strengthen the support network for students. Lastly, facilitating opportunities for skill development and career exploration will build confidence and decision-making efficacy among students.

In sum, insights from this issue of the *IJEVG* underscore the need for inclusive and adaptive career guidance practices. By addressing discrimination, enhancing employability, and fostering career adaptability, professionals can significantly impact the career trajectories of diverse student populations. Emphasizing local context, individualized support, and community engagement can empower students to navigate their career paths effectively. As the landscape of career guidance evolves, a holistic approach that prioritizes resilience, self-efficacy, and cultural sensitivity will ensure that all individuals can pursue fulfilling careers in an increasingly complex world.

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We'd like to remind that full access to the *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IJEVG)* is included as part of your membership.

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GREECE

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The updated occupational profile of “Career and Vocational Guidance Counselor” in Greece



The Labour Institute (INE GSEE), a nonprofit scientific and research organization of the Greek General Confederation of Labour (GSEE), has recently developed a study about the updated occupational profile of “Career and Vocational Guidance Counselor” and the framework of educational specifications for vocational education and training programs.

This study which has been certified by the National Greek Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications & Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) aims to ensure that the counselors providing such services to the public demonstrably possess the required knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for carrying out their role. Furthermore, this study is combined with the new institutional certification framework for career and vocational guidance counselors and incorporates the principles and directions of European and national policy. Aiming at safeguarding the public interest, it defines the conditions, required qualifications, and prerequisites for practicing the profession of Career and Vocational Guidance Counselor through a modern perspective promoting the professionalism of the sector. Similarly, the framework of educational specifications for vocational education and training programs fully utilizes the "raw material" of the professional profile and formulates the minimum basic specifications that precede any educational design, regardless of its particular institutional characteristics.

To develop this study, a writing team was formed under the supervision of the Institute of Labour of the General Confederation of Greek Workers (INE GSEE) and in collaboration with the Centre for the Development of Educational Policy of the Greek Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen and Merchants (KAELE ESEE).

FURTHER READING

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CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

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CEE Guidance Network: Strengthening Career Guidance in Central and Eastern Europe

By Tibor Bors Borbély-Pecze



Career guidance is evolving rapidly across Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), and a new regional initiative is at the heart of this transformation. The CEE Guidance Network brings together career development associations from Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Romania to strengthen collaboration, share best practices, and jointly innovate in the field of lifelong guidance.

Launched to respond to shared challenges and opportunities in the region, the network provides a platform for professional exchange, policy advocacy, and the development of joint projects. Its mission is to promote high-quality, accessible, and client-centered career guidance services, while also supporting the professionalization of the field through training, certification, and shared standards.

The CEE Guidance Network has already initiated several collaborative activities, including mutual participation in events, co-creation of resources, and joint contributions to European and global discussions on career development. A key focus is adapting and applying international best practices to local contexts.

Through initiatives like these, the CEE Guidance Network is helping to elevate career guidance across the region and ensure that individuals of all ages have access to skilled, ethical, and forward-looking support for their career and learning journeys.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information about the network and its activities visit <https://cee-guidance.eu/>

INDIA

Sachin Kumar, Principal at the Wazir Ram Singh Government College, Dehri, Kangra, India and Board Member of IAEVG



A New Education Policy and Curriculum Framework in India

By Sachin Kumar



Education, employment, and social justice policies are crucial factors that shape individuals' career and livelihood paths. In 2020, the Indian Parliament enacted a National Education Policy (NEP) aimed at transforming the country's academic structure. The NEP proposes a shift from the traditional 10+2 system to a new 5+3+3+4 model, beginning education at age three and introducing four stages: Foundation, Preparatory, Middle, and Secondary. As decisions regarding career paths move to Class 9, career guidance must adapt to these new transition points. The focus on multidisciplinary studies will challenge career practitioners in advising students on subject combinations and future careers, while simultaneously increasing demand for teachers and counsellors in emerging sectors.

A key initiative of the NEP is the development of a National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE), which was published in 2023. This framework is set to significantly influence educational and vocational guidance practices in India. It will shape students' exposure to subjects, skills, and practical experiences, profoundly affecting their career development. As a result, career practitioners must stay informed about these changes and work closely with schools and educational authorities to align their counselling practices with the evolving landscape. The NCF-SE emphasizes the importance of exposing students to diverse subjects and practical experiences, fostering their exploration of interests and strengths. Integrating career-oriented components such as vocational training, internships, and career counselling will enhance students' awareness of various professions.

With around 150,000 secondary and 142,000 higher secondary schools in India, approximately 300,000 counsellors are needed. However, inadequate training infrastructure poses a significant barrier to recruitment. Educational planners must establish institutions and develop specialized courses to prepare professionals for effective guidance services. Current curricula often view career counselling as just one module among many, underscoring the necessity for dedicated programs that improve the quality of career guidance for students.

Career counsellors, associations, and stakeholders—including teachers and educational administrators—must remain informed and aligned to effectively navigate the gradual implementation of NCF-SE provisions. It is critical to leverage the opportunities presented by the NCF-SE, address the challenges it introduces, and cultivate an enabling environment for all stakeholders involved.

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SRI LANKA

Strengthening Career Guidance in Sri Lanka: A Strategic Vision for 2025–2029



Sri Lanka has unveiled its National Career Guidance Strategic Plan for 2025–2029, marking a significant step towards enhancing career development services across the nation. This strategy aims to establish a cohesive framework that integrates career guidance into the country's educational and employment systems.

The plan emphasizes the development of standardized competency frameworks for career guidance practitioners, ensuring consistent and high-quality support for individuals navigating their career paths. By aligning with international best practices, Sri Lanka seeks to professionalize the field and provide accessible, equitable services to all citizens.

Key initiatives include the integration of career education into school curricula, the expansion of digital platforms for career information dissemination, and targeted support for vulnerable populations. The strategy also outlines mechanisms for continuous monitoring and evaluation to adapt to the evolving labor market landscape.

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IMPRESSUM

The Editorial Board thanks all authors and team members who contributed to this issue for their precious work.

The IAEVG Magazine (formally know Newsletter) is published three times a year, presenting short articles, columns, reviews and previews of conferences, events and resources.

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