Guidance counselling in adult education. Results of guidance counselling desk research and 27 qualitative interviews with guidance counsellors.

iYOT – IO 1 Report – A1 Research

Agnes Raschauer & Katharina Resch (ed.)

Vienna, April 2016

Editors

Agnes Raschauer, Postgraduate Center, University of Vienna (AT)

Katharina Resch, Postgraduate Center, University of Vienna (AT)

Contributors

Tanja Božič, Public University of Ptuj (SI)

João Constancio, União das Freguesias de Gondomar (PT)

Alcidio Jesus, União das Freguesias de Gondomar (PT)

Petja Janžekovič, Public University of Ptuj (SI)

Table of contents

1.   Introduction to the report

In recent years, increasing importance has been attributed to guidance counselling within the field of adult education. Throughout the literature it is stated that up to this date guidance counselling in adult education does not denote a defined professional field – in comparison to the Anglo-American context, in which there has been a long tradition of counselling as professional practice. In Europe, a broad set of providers are offering guidance counselling: public and private organizations of adult education, employment agencies, other government agencies, counselling firms, human resources departments within corporations, regional networks, NGOs etc. These providers and the counselling services they offer differ greatly in regard to methods used, aims and priorities of the counselling process, occupational background of the counsellors or institutional context. Subsequently, educational profiles of counsellors, skills and competences required for guidance counselling, other forms of further education needed by the counsellors, or the need for ICT-based support remain open.

While European policies such as the Commission's Communications on lifelong learning (see European Commission 2001 and 2002) or the Council's Resolutions on the topic (see Council of the European Union 2004 and 2008) support the development and professionalization of guidance counselling, professional practice is often times still para-professional or even non-professional, and offers a wide range of development opportunities.

The EU-funded project "iYOT: In Your Own Time" (2015-2017) aims at enhancing the administrative and counselling capacities of adult education and lifelong learning organizations in order to raise their ability to support participants with counselling services over distance. A mobile application shall be devised to support guidance counsellors, associated by guidelines for mobile counselling and trainings for counsellors to use the developed app. The devised technology and materials will be offered free of charge on an online platform as open access resource for anyone involved in or interested in adult education and lifelong guidance counselling. This report will serve as foundation for the development of guidelines and the implementation of a model for a mobile guidance counselling system in the iYOT-project. To this end, the project partners conducted research on how current guidance counselling practices in adult education are shaped, how providers communicate their services to learners and how mobile counselling has to be constructed to benefit existing practices.

For this report literature and policy documents were analysed as well as primary data was collected with 27 qualitative interviews with guidance counsellors.

2. Topic and research questions

2.1 Introduction: Country specific approach to mobile guidance counselling

"iYOT: In Your Own Time" focuses on guidance and counselling within adult education and lifelong learning organizations across Europe. The project aims at furthering counselling capacities of adult education and lifelong learning organizations across Europe in order to strengthen their abilities to support participants with mobile counselling services.

Counselling refers to a diverse set of activities that encompass practices of informing, consulting but also training adult learners. Counselling can occur in specific organizations providing adult education, across individual providers of service but also in the workplace, communal centers or other facilities. Counselling is not confined to a two person face-to-face interaction but can involve group sessions or telephone and online services (see OECD/European Union 2004: 10). Moreover, guidance counselling is heavily dependent upon the national framework of adult education and lifelong learning. Focusing on guidance counselling within adult education opens up a broad field of potential research.

The research undertaken by the project members of iYOT is two-fold, directed at the state-of-the-art of guidance counselling from a European perspective on the one hand and at the experiences of practicing guidance counsellors on the other. We are taking a country-specific approach by gathering first-hand data in all the partner countries. We aim to systematically inquire the experiences and needs of counsellors by designing an interview guide with questions posed to all interview partners and making available key interview passages both in the partner languages and in English (see 4.1 Methodology). At the same time our research is sensitive to local specificities, giving room for considerable variation in the way the interview interactions are shaped. Moreover, the research is conducted in five different languages and only selectively made accessible for comparative analysis. These methodological limitations need to be taken into account for assessing the presented findings.

2.2 Research questions

In our research we focus on the following questions:

How does current guidance counselling practice in the realm of adult education and lifelong learning look like?

- How can counselling services be described (institutional setting, format, types of learners etc.)?
- How is guidance counselling being framed at EU-level (policies and strategies) and which measures for implementation are being taken?

- From the perspective of counsellors within adult education: How is counselling being shaped? How do counsellors structure their work, what kind of information do they rely on, how do they assess existing services?

How do adult education and lifelong learning organizations communicate their counselling services to potential clients?

- Where and how do they find their clients? Which target groups are addressed?
- Which groups of people are they not able to address via existing services? Why?

How do mobile guidance counselling services have to be constructed to benefit existing guidance counselling practices?

- What kind of problems do guidance counsellors face?
- Which skills and activities of guidance counsellors can be supported by the use of ICT? How should the measures be designed to enhance counsellors' capacities?
- Which strategies for PR and communication lend itself to reaching specific target groups?

3.   Desk research

3.1   Introduction / rationale for desk research

On a general level, we will describe the state-of-the-art of guidance counselling in adult education so as to be able to point to problems, needs and gaps within existing practices of counselling. Therefore, we will research how counselling in adult education and the labor market is being scientifically examined. Since we wish to develop technology for assisting guidance practices over distance and communication with target audiences, we will put a special focus on the scientific debates on ICT-assisted counselling: What are the role and function of ICT for counselling practices and which technologies are currently being used in what ways? How is online learning being done?

With desk research we furthermore assess European strategy and policy on guidance counselling in adult education and lifelong learning: How is guidance counselling being framed and which measures are being taken? Further, we will interrogate existing resources on a European level that offer information on adult education and lifelong learning since these can serve as a starting point for our efforts of technology development.

3.2   European strategies and policies

Guidance and counselling have been at the forefront of European lifelong learning policies in recent years (see Commission of the European Communities 2007; European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education 2005; European Universities Charter on Lifelong Learning 2008). Guidance and counselling are understood as "a range of activities such as information, assessment, orientation and advice to assist learners, trainers and other staff to make choices relating to education and training programmes or employment opportunities" (Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council cf. Brooks/ Burton 2008: 45-46).[1] Counselling denotes services to support individuals regardless of their sociodemographic characteristics, social background or station in life to make informed decisions and enable them to direct their educational and occupational pathways. In many cases this form of support is not offered by itself but integrated into other institutional contexts, experiences of learning or forms of service provision (cf. Sultana 2004: 31). A more detailed definition of the activities associated with counselling is put forth by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training:

---

[1]   Aside from the term "guidance and counselling services" other expressions frequently adopted in European strategy documents are "career guidance" and "lifelong guidance". In the different European member states a multitude of terms in the national languages are used. In this research guidance and counselling are understood in a broad sense in accordance with the definitions stated above. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the different national terminologies point to characteristics in approaches towards counselling and understandings thereof.

"A range of activities designed to help individuals take educational, vocational or personal decisions and carry them out before and after they enter the labour market.

Comment: guidance and counselling may include:

- counselling (personal or career development, educational guidance),
- assessment (psychological or competence-/ performancerelated),
- information on learning and labour market opportunities and career management,
- consultation with peers, relatives or educators,
- vocational preparation (pinpointing skills/competences and experience for jobseeking),
- referrals (to learning and career specialists).

Guidance and counselling can be provided at schools, training centres, job centres, the workplace, the community or in other settings." (Cedefop 2008: 87)

There have been two main driving forces behind EU policy developments in the field of guidance. The first is mainly an economic and social perspective: the vision put forth in Lisbon in 2000 to make Europe the most competitive knowledge based economy and a society marked by social inclusion by 2010. With the process suggested by the Lisbon Agenda guidance has been introduced in many fields. Education was tied to employment policy which strengthened its position within policy-making processes and brought about a change of direction in EU education and training policy. The second driving force has been the renewed interest in the role of career guidance to support lifelong learning, itself an essential ingredient of a successful knowledge based economy and society, shown by the Organisation for Economic and Social Development (OECD). These two driving forces have become more integrated over time (cf. McCarthy 2007).

Three periods of developing guidance counselling as European priority can be marked according to Watts et al. (2010):

- First period: Foundation (1957-1992)
- Second period: Consolidation (1992-2000)
- Last period: Elevation (2000 to the present)

In the first period "vocational guidance" was recognized as a fundamental activity to further competences enhancing individuals' employment opportunities. Vocational guidance was intended to be "available free of charge, both to young persons, including schoolchildren, and to adults" (Watts et al. 2010). Thus, Guidelines for a Vocational Training Policy were developed and implemented by the Council of Ministers in 1963 to coordinate responsive guidance services for young people and adults, accompanied by common financial and human resources addressed to these social and learning improvements (Watts et al. 2010). In addition, these further improvements were complemented by more specific studies on guidance services for

adults (see Köditz 1989), on transnational guidance activities (see Plant 1990), on the occupational profiles of vocational counsellors (see Watts 1992), and on career guidance services for disadvantaged young people (see Chisholm 1994).

In this first period attention was laid on "counselling in order to identify individual problems and to provide motivation, particularly for those at risk of becoming long-term unemployed; such counselling should be available at regular and frequent intervals, take a properly structured form and place emphasis on follow-up measures" (Council of Employment Ministers 87/C 335/01 cf. Watts et al. 2010). In this sense, a foundation for guidance services was laid down in this first period.

With the creation of a common market even greater attention was put on career guidance in the second period. The facilitation of "mobility of goods, services and capital [...] had major implications for the mobility of students, trainees and workers. To support the successful management of such mobility, a strong case was made for effective networking between guidance services in each of the member-states. This required action at EU-level as well as within the member-states themselves." (Watts et al. 2010) Programs such as Leonardo (covering vocational training), Socrates (covering secondary education), Comenius (covering pre-primary, primary and secondary education) and Grundtvig (covering adult education) were designed to support transnational cooperation.

A wide range of activities have been funded and budgeted by the European Union to implement lifelong learning. As consequence, the concept of guidance was opened up to cover a new scenario of social and professional development for Europe. In 2000 a new era began which saw greater stimulation and innovative approaches, strongly connecting lifelong learning activities to guidance actions.

> "Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (EC, 2000) highlighted the importance of guidance in this respect. This led to a consultation process across Europe to identify coherent strategies and practical measures that could foster lifelong learning for all. The outcome was the Commission's Communication on lifelong learning (EC, 2001): This reiterated the key role of guidance in national lifelong learning strategies, and included a recommendation that a European Guidance Forum be established." (Watts et al. 2010)

Within this context, "lifelong guidance" has replaced "vocational guidance" as the focus of EU policy. This change is significant in two respects. First, the distinction between educational and vocational guidance has become blurred, in line with the merging of education and training. Second, the focus is now put on providing guidance throughout life. This reflects developments in the labor market which suggest that transitions between education, training and work are becoming less linear in knowledge based societies, and consequently skills in managing education, training and occupational pathways are increasingly needed by all citizens throughout their lifespan.

Therefore a new definition and idea of guidance has been put forth:

> "The concept of "lifelong guidance" is a contested notion, as is the concept of "lifelong learning" to which it is linked. The move from "education and training" to "learning" moves the primary focus from structures and institutions to the individual learner; a heightened attention to guidance is a natural complement to this change. Some writers see such concepts as being informed by a neo liberal ideology and ethic that individualises public woes: In the lifelong learning/guidance discourse, it is the entrepreneurial individual who, as a "good citizen," must constantly engage in learning/training to maintain "use value" in what has been dubbed "the ruthless economy," where "market reform insists that we learn, all the time, about everything, exhaustively and exhaustingly all through our lives." (Seddon & Mellor 2006: 209)

On the other hand, lifelong guidance can alternatively be viewed as a manifestation of "reclaimed citizenship" (Sultana 2008: 17), inspired by a desire to empower citizens to understand and gain some control over conditions generated by a "risk society" (Beck 1992), where lifelong job tenure and guaranteed economic security are increasingly threatened features in the social contract between the state and the individual. In such a context career guidance is seen as one aspect of the state's duty to provide support to its citizens as they navigate the challenging social and economic vicissitudes of contemporary life (cf. Watts 2000).

According to Susanne Kraatz (2015) two main Council Resolutions were dedicated to lifelong guidance policies (2004, 2008). Since policy reviews had identified that guidance provision in the member states was often fragmented and uneven, the resolution on "Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the field of Guidance throughout life in Europe" (Council of the European Union 2004) defined the concept and called for building up European structures for policy coordination. Five five key areas for reform were identified across member states:

- the development of lifelong guidance systems;
- the broadening of access to guidance across the lifespan;
- the strengthening of quality-assurance mechanisms for guidance services, information and products, especially from a citizen/user perspective;
- the refocusing of guidance provision to develop citizens' career management skills;
- the strengthening of structures for policy and systems development at national and regional levels.

Following the idea of involving appropriate key players (cf. Council of the European Union 2004) new groups of policy-makers, stakeholders and experts, supported by the EC and national public and private bodies, were involved in promoting the above-illustrated key-strategies for lifelong guidance around Europe.

> "Citizens were acknowledged as stakeholders who should be consulted in the development of policies and systems for career guidance. The Resolution thus reflected "a paradigm shift in how career guidance is conceptualised and delivered, and how to make the transition from traditional models to a lifelong guidance approach." (Sultana 2008: 12)

To achieve the purpose of quality guidance services that are universally available across Europe, the Council of the European Union has adopted a Resolution on improving the role of lifelong guidance in lifelong learning strategies (2008). The resolution acknowledges the centrality of guidance for education and training policies as well as its leading role in supporting employment growth and successful careers for individuals. It lays down four priority areas:

1) acquisition of career management skills,
2) facilitation of access to guidance services,
3) development of quality assurance in guidance provision, and
4) encouragement of cooperation and coordination among stakeholders.

Since 2007, the European Commission (DG Education and Culture) has been funding a member-state driven policy network, the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). ELGPN aims to assist the EU member states (plus neighbouring countries) and the Commission in developing lifelong guidance policies. Currently, it has 30 member countries (plus Switzerland as observer). Since 2009, DG Employment and Social Affairs has been taking part, thus illustrating the link between education and employment at EU level.

The network has produced a number of European tools for policy implementation and concept notes connecting ELGPN activities with European policy priorities (i.e. youth guarantee, early school leaving). As a cooperation product "A European Resource Kit -Lifelong Guidance Policy Development" was issued in 2012 and translated to 16 member languages; working groups are following its implementation. A second tool to be mentioned is "The Evidence Base on Lifelong Guidance: Guide to Key Findings for Effective Policy and Practice" combining findings from research with recommendations for evidence gathering. In 2015, ELGPN aimed to compile the existing tools into European Guidelines for Lifelong Guidance. A recent survey demonstrates considerable impact of structured EU cooperation: More than half of the ELGPN member-countries report that the Work Programmes 2008-2014 have had significant influence on national policies of lifelong guidance and all other countries list examples of some impact. The future of European policy development and cooperation is, however, uncertain as funding under ERASMUS+ ends in 2015. Different options are considered for continuation. Following the reorganisation of the Commission, the responsibility for the network lies now with DG Employment and Social Affairs as part of the skills policies strand (cf. Kraatz 2015).

Reviews of policies for guidance in European countries jointly undertaken by the European Commission and the OECD show that, in many countries, policies, systems and practices for guidance do not match the demands of knowledge-based economies and societies (cf. Council of the European Union 2004). In 2002, the EU commission established an expert group on lifelong guidance, which has developed a set of common European reference tools: common aims and principles for lifelong guidance provision; common reference points for quality assurance systems for guidance; key features of a systems model of lifelong guidance (cf. Cedefop 2005). Arising from the 2004 EU Council Resolution, the European Commission granted funding to set up two pilot European Networks of National Forums for Lifelong Guidance in 12 countries (cf. National Guidance Forum Report 2007).

> "In 1992 the European Commission took the initiative to form a European Network of national resource and information centres for guidance, which later became the Euroguidance Network. [...] Euroguidance was established as one of the three strands of the PETRA programme. From the beginning the network consisted of 12 countries. [...] From 2007-2014 the Euroguidance Network became part of the Lifelong Learning Programme. Today the network includes centres in 34 countries and is co-financed by the Erasmus+ programme." (euro|guidance 2016)

Euroguidance supports internationalization of guidance and counselling and is a European network of national resource and information centres for guidance. All Euroguidance centres share two common goals namely to promote the European dimension in guidance and to provide quality information on lifelong guidance and mobility for learning purposes. The main target group of Euroguidance are guidance practitioners and policy makers from the educational and employment sectors in all European countries (cf. Plant/Thomsen 2011).

One important player in the realm of European lifelong counselling and guidance is the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop). Founded in 1975 and based in Greece since 1995, Cedefop supports the development of European vocational education and training (VET) policies and contributes to their implementation (cf. Cedefop 2016). Cedefop's research on lifelong guidance is concerned with the changing needs of individuals in their careers and lives. The centre has developed reference research on standards for guidance professionals' competences, systems' development, and the improvement of cooperation between stakeholders. Cedefop also works with the European Commission on the development of tools and principles, which support the work of guidance professionals and the careers of individuals. Among them are the European Union Skills Panorama, which makes European labor market intelligence available to professionals, workers and learners or relevant frameworks for guidance professionals' work such as ECVET, the EQF framework and the guidelines for validation of informal and non-formal learning. Cedefop cooperates with

member states through ELPGN and encourages knowledge exchange between experts and practitioners by aligning with Euroguidance and international associations such as IAEVG, ICCDPP and Fedora (cf. Institute of Guidance Counsellors 2016).

The European Commission (2008) emphasized the importance of upgrading skills for all as a necessity and not a luxury, in the context of technological change, globalization, the shift to a low carbon economy and an aging population under the banner of "New Skills for New Jobs". This entails an emphasis on learning throughout life and the anticipation of future needs so as to enable people to identify and develop the 'right' skills (using information services, counselling and guidance) needed in the labor market. The agenda "New Skills for New Jobs" aims to promote employment and reintegration of dismissed workers into the labor market through activation, retraining and development of skills needed for the changes brought about by modernization (cf. European Commission 2008). Orientation towards employability has been defined as individuals' "openness to develop and adapt to new demands of the job" (Nauta et al. 2009: 234).

For example, soft skills were cited as valuable to employers. In some cases they are seen as the most valuable resource for the purpose of recruitment, more valuable than formal qualifications or technical skills, especially if individuals can be easily trained to develop these capabilities. According to the European Union (2011), increasing people's awareness of the role of transferable skills to improve their employability and occupational mobility is the task of job centers and agencies as well as educational institutions and university system. Generally, the main task is to motivate people to be interested in developing their transferable skills. However, tools used to motivate people to develop their transferable skills can differ according to the specificities of different groups (European Union 2011).

3.3   Guidance counselling in adult education

In recent years, increasing importance has been attributed to guidance and counselling within the field of adult education itself, which can be traced by the amount of publications and discussion events focusing on the topic. This heightened interest is in part due to counselling being prioritized by EU strategies and policies, as described above. The political interest on the EU-level extends to national frameworks, putting guidance counselling on the agenda of political actors across the board in most member states (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 7).[2] Moreover, larger societal trends have contributed to the primacy of counselling within professional practice, i.e. the individualization of education and career paths, which has consequences for the field of adult education, and the broadening of formats of learning. More
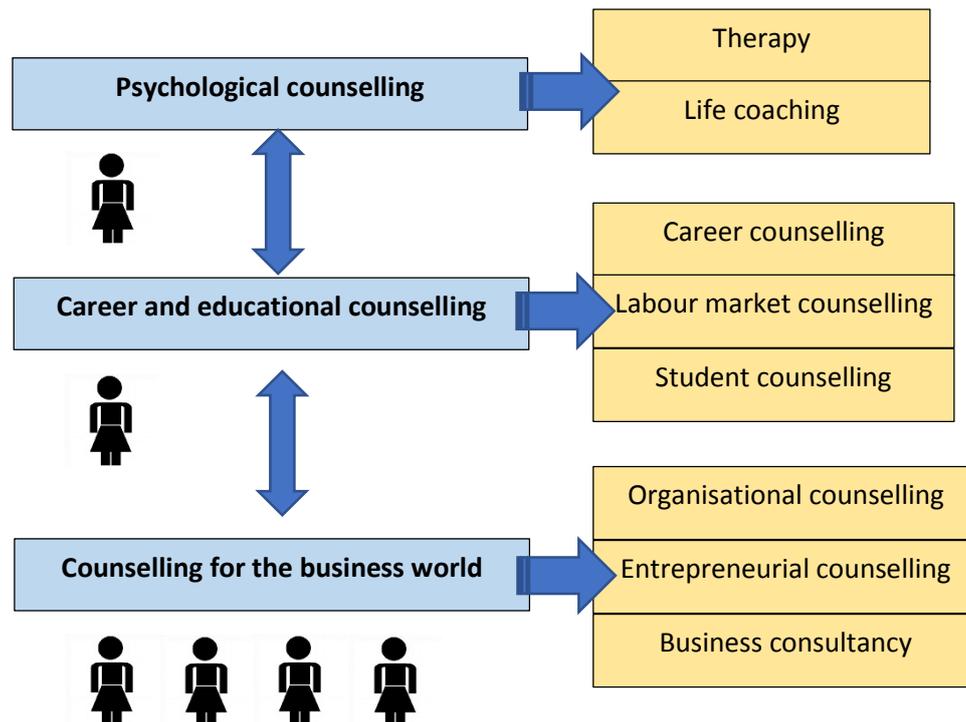
---

[2]   The political interest however is not accompanied by extensive practical implications for the most part. Many authors question the degree to which guidance policy is implemented within national contexts (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 8).

individualized and flexible educational and career paths substitute clearly defined career profiles and standardized patterns of education leading to specific jobs. Subsequently, individuals are being called upon to actively design their course of education and employment. In order to participate in meaningful employment they need to assess their own strengths and weaknesses and actively shape their trajectories through skill development, continuing education and lifelong learning. Being confronted with the overflow of possible educational services and courses, adult learners also need counselling to get orientated on opportunities of adult education and how their educational or career paths relate to that. On the other hand, a broadening of formats of learning can be detected. Attention is moved away from styles of delivery and directed towards the learners, informal learning and the acquisition of competences. This shift carries implications for how to design processes of learning but also for the need for counselling to support learning experiences (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 7-8).[3] Lastly, the growing interest for counselling is informed by developments within the field of adult education itself. Continuous expansion of adult education markets necessitates expert knowledge from counsellors to help learners to get oriented within a confusing realm of educational supply (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 13). Thus counselling needs to serve as personal assistance for learners to choose the 'right' form of adult education (cf. Schiersmann/ Thiel 2004: 891).

Throughout the reviewed literature, it is stated that up to this date counselling in adult education does not denote a precisely defined professional field – except in an Anglo-American context where there is a long tradition of counselling as professional practice (cf. Engel et al. 2004: 36). However, guidance counselling can be distinguished from other forms of counselling practice as shown below (Table 1): psychological counselling and business consultancy.

---

[3]   A third trend which is not focused on by this project and shall only be mentioned are transformations within the labor market which entice businesses and corporations to tailor specific offers of continuing education to their employees. In this sense one important area of activity for institutions of lifelong learning is cooperating with organizations and developing corporate programs specific to their needs. By this token, lifelong learning can be interpreted as a means of staff development (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 8).

Table 1: Distinguished fields of counselling and consultancy

Psychological counselling	Therapy
	Life coaching

Career and educational counselling	Career counselling
	Labour market counselling
	Student counselling

Counselling for the business world	Organisational counselling
	Entrepreneurial counselling
	Business consultancy

A broad set of providers are offering the mentioned types of counselling: public and private organizations of adult education, employment agencies, other government agencies, counselling firms, human resources departments within corporations, regional networks, NGOs etc. These providers and the counselling services they offer differ greatly in regard to concepts and methods used, aims and priorities of the counselling process, occupational background of the counsellors or institutional context. This empirical diversity of counselling is accompanied by a lack of comprehensive research and well-established, elaborated theories guiding counselling practice (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 8). Subsequently, (educational) profiles of counsellors, skills and competences required for counselling as well as forms of further education needed by the counsellors remain open discussions (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 105).

On a positive note, this intricacy affords flexibility to the practice of counselling, the possibility to respond to the needs of the learner in an individualized way as well as interdisciplinary approaches. At the same time, there lies a danger of arbitrariness, which impedes quality assurance and the agreement on common standards (cf. Nestmann et al. 2004: 599; Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 74). One problem seems to be that there is little transparency for learners where to go with their specific concerns (Schiersmann/ Thiel 2004: 903).

Anne Schlüter argues that counselling within adult education should be seen as specific professional field that has to be differentiated from other forms of counselling. Yet counselling within adult education is heavily dependent upon the differing regional (or national) conditions, the types of providers, legal regulations, the structure of the educational system,

resources available etc. (cf. Schlüter 2010b: 19). Counselling always denotes a non-standardized form of interaction that entails a moment of reflexivity (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 10). The main element is helping learners to decide on further means of education (cf. Schlüter 2010b: 28).

> "Counselling is a multifaceted, continuously changing professional practice of lending support that is determined by many internal as well as external factors. It helps manage demands of making decisions, dealing with problems and crises as well as design individual and social ways of life and biographies in various ways." (Nestmann et al. 2004: 599, transl. AR)

More research is needed on the mixed forms of professional practice in these flexible and diverse (national) contexts of guidance counselling, in which career guidance, educational counselling, mentoring, coaching, advice and information giving are often mixed in professional practice (cf. Bimrose/ Kettunen/ Goddard 2015). The literature differentiates different forms of professional practice:

- Career guidance counselling
- Psychological or psychotherapy counselling
- Social counselling / Life counselling

These professional guidance counselling practices require certain and certified skills from counsellors, while other forms of para-professional counselling like advice and information giving might not require these skills. Professional counsellors have a set of skills: reflexive knowledge (i.e. self-reflection), structural knowledge (i.e. adult education market), knowledge about rules and regulations (i.e. national and legal context of counselling).

Counsellors can be a) professionals as noted above, b) para-professionals or c) non-professionals depending on institutional, national or legal requirements and the type of guidance counselling given (cf. Gieseke/ Käpplinger/ Otto 2007). Para-professionals are trained to deal with certain problems of learners, but have no formal education or training as counsellors. Non-professionals support people in decision making, they give advice and information or solve other problems together with adult learners. In any case counselling is considered highly ambitious, both emotionally and technically, for the counsellor. The better and more practical the training of the counsellor (the degree of professionalization), the better the counsellor is equipped to deal with emotional or technical strains during the process of counselling (cf. Gieseke/ Käpplinger/ Otto 2007).

According to the literature, tasks of counsellors are diverse, but contain some or most of these key elements: *informing-explaining-activating-facilitating-analysing-counselling.*

- *informing* (informative first counselling, giving away of information on processes or admission procedures)

- *explaining* (procedures, processes, techniques, methods, course of action)
- *activating* the learner to take next steps (empowerment)
- *facilitating* processes (which steps to take next in the process)
- *analysing* and *diagnosing* (diagnosing types of learners, types of careers, types of study etc.)
- *counselling* as such (guiding someone through a problem with a defined method)

Other key activities performed in counselling could be mental training, support with writing texts or filling in forms, transferring and referring learners to other support services and centers, life coaching or content-specific counselling (finding a roommate, solving visa issues etc.).

Generally, we differ between personal counselling in a one-on-one setting and organizational counselling with companies, business partners, or public bodies.

Table 2: Types of counselling:
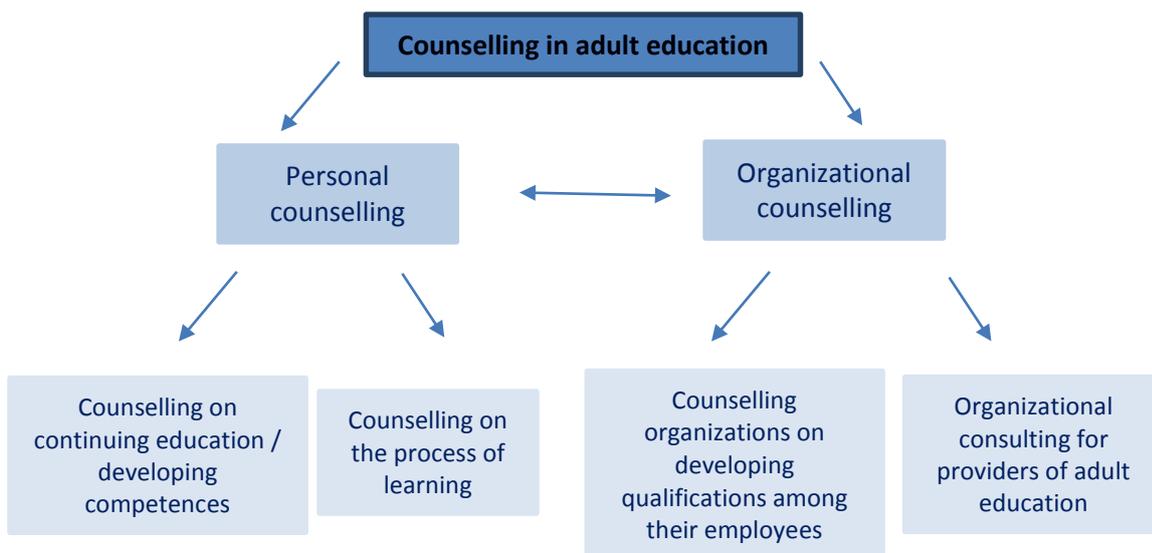
Source: Schiersmann/Remmele 2004: 9, transl. AR

iYOT focuses on the realm of personal counselling and within this dimension on counselling on continuing education / developing competences and not on the process of learning itself.[4] We find the differences between these three functions of guidance counselling crucial (cf. Käpplinger/ Maier-Gutheil 2015):

1. **Guidance counselling for learning**: counsellors support adult learners during their education or studies; counselling topics are related to the learning process such as learning barriers, anxiety before exams, learning to learn etc. These learning issues

---

[4] Counselling on the process of learning can include individualized counselling on learning barriers, trainings on methods and strategies for learning, support in self-learning centers or tools for reflecting on one's own style of learning (cf. Schiersmann/Remmele 2004: 131).

can be connected to psychological problems such as performance or efficiency problems, shyness, mental health problems or even anxiety disorders.

2. **Career counselling or educational counselling**: counsellors support adult learners to choose the right field of study for themselves as learners might be overwhelmed with the amount of opportunities; counselling focuses on finding the right entry point into the labor market or the educational market; many times career guidance or the process of finding a job are discussed in counselling.

3. **Financial guidance counselling**: counsellors support adult learners to find grants, sponsoring, awards or scholarships for their purposes, which are in many countries connected to official unemployment benefits. Sometimes also career counselling is put under this category, if someone is counselled about founding their own business and needs financial support.

iYOT focuses on the second point: Career counselling or educational counselling. The key question is: "How do learners make informed decisions about their careers and their educational possibilities?"

It is interesting that in comparison to point 1 and 3, point 2 does not show direct effects as quickly as the other forms of counselling. Guidance counselling in the form of career counselling or educational counselling has long-term and delayed effects, which can often times not be measured easily (cf. Käpplinger/ Maier-Gutheil 2015). This is understandable, since educational counselling often leads to a form of participation in a course of programme, which takes several months, so effects are seldom direct effects.

Counselling as a process:

The counselling process is as diverse as the target groups, national and institutional contexts and professional practices are across countries and providers. Different traditions of counselling refer to different ways to design the process of counselling. Generally, it should be made clear, what the counselling process encompasses: one session or a series of counselling sessions.

Schiersmann and Remmele identify the following structuring elements of a counselling session (cf. Schiermann/ Remmele 2004: 69), which are taken as a template for a typical process here, but can also be found in other publications with some adaptations (c.f. Käpplinger/ Maier-Gutheil 2015; Gieseke/ Käpplinger/ Otto 2007):

- **Defining the aim of the counselling process and of expectations**
- [→ Clearance: Is this the right format of support for the learner? If no → transfer to other support services (i.e. mentoring, coaching, financial guidance, therapy…)] (cf. Gieseke/ Käpplinger/ Otto 2007)
- **Problem analysis / current status of the learner**
- **Exchange of information**

- **Developing of action strategies / decision-making / next steps**
- **Evaluation**

According to Schiersmann and Remmele, counselling encompasses standard components such as the discussion of possibilities of further education or training, finances and opportunities of funding or entry requirements and at the same time more complex items such as analyzing the learners' education and employment pathways, personal background (family, finances, mobility) and individual strengths or weaknesses (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 77). In counselling interactions counsellors need to convey information and knowledge while at the same time develop a personal relationship with the learner (cf. Nollmann 2010: 39). How these two diverging type of practices are combined within a counselling interaction can vary considerably (cf. Schiersmann/ Thiel 2004: 899). On top most counsellors have to engage in activities that facilitate counselling but are not themselves to be considered counselling such as: doing research / acquiring information, networking / establishing cooperation, administrative work, public relations, writing project proposals / documenting project activities, data maintenance and lobbying / communicating with sponsors (cf. Schiermann/ Remmele 2004: 46-47).

Oftentimes counsellors are faced with far-reaching issues that transcend educational counselling and reach into financial counselling or learning counselling (as described above), but are highly relevant for the learners in terms of attainment and learning opportunities. These might include health issues, subsistence or (psychological) state of mind. Thus, there is no simple answer regarding the question of possible content or limits of counselling (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 81-83). But it seems evident that counsellors have to have expert knowledge both on the field they inform on (opportunities of adult education) as well as command counselling and interactive competences to design the counselling process (cf. Engel et al. 2004: 35).

Counselling can aim at a set of different goals – both from the view of the counsellors as well as from the view of the learners. These goals can encompass returning to work after a period of non-employment, developing further skills relevant for finding or keeping a job, taking-up previous education and attaining a degree, self-employment, upward employment mobility or personal development / lifelong learning (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 67-69).

Since supply and demand for counselling within adult education are increasing – Käpplinger and Maier-Gutheil (2015) speak of a "counselling boom" – and educational markets are becoming ever more segmented, the question which actors are best equipped to offer counselling services remains open. On the one hand, providers of adult education tend to focus on the courses and programs they themselves offer (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 11; Schlüter 2010a: 9). On the other hand, it is questioned whether counselling services

independent of specific providers are needed and if they could stay informed on the diverse educational opportunities. Since the sector of adult education is characterized by great heterogeneity, Schiersmann and Thiel argue against one dominant form of institutionalizing guidance counselling (Schiersmann/ Thiel 2004: 902). The authors sketch out the following scenarios for developing counselling in adult education:

- Counselling will be incorporated increasingly into the professional practice of adult educators (counselling on learning).
- Counselling will be integrated into different institutions (government facilities, corporations, chambers of commerce etc.).
- Counselling will be performed by autonomous providers of counselling.
- Counselling will be increasingly done by networks and coalitions of stakeholders in the field of adult education (cf. Schiersmann 2004: 902-903).

3.4   ICT-assisted / ICT-based counselling

The integration of ICT in the delivery of career guidance and counselling services is certainly not new. Due to globalized educational / labor markets and increasing mobility within Europe, ICT-assisted counselling has become an attractive field of practice, since many learners or job-seekers are abroad or are attracted by new ICT-formats because they are young and belong to the internet generation. At many providers of adult education learning increasingly happens through the use of ICT (i.e. mobile learning, blended learning) as well. There is certainly a need for mobile counselling, since many face-to-face counselling services are full or lack resources (cf. Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 7). While there have been active discussion on mobile learning within different scientific disciplines for many years, ICT-assisted counselling has only recently moved to the center of debates on counselling. As stated above, designing processes of learning and educational counselling denote different types of practices.

Mobile learning as an educational activity makes sense only when the technology in use is fully mobile (iPad, smart phone, tablet, laptop) and when the users of the technology are also mobile while they learn (cf. El-Hussein/ Cronje 2010). Göksu and Atici (2013) recommend developing a technology roadmap: determining system requirements, technological areas of usage, timelines, alternatives for technology, and how reports are created by the mobile device.

Mobile learning technology can support learning and counselling in the following forms (cf. El-Hussein/ Cronje 2010):

- communication (texting, sms, forums)
- organization (calendar, addresses, note pads, to do lists)
- applications (databases, e-book reader)
- relaxation (music, games, quizzes, camera, videos)

- information (dictionaries, news channels, references, literature)

Guidance counselling which is performed online (as web-based guidance, e-guidance and internet guidance) is marked by increased accessibility, increased interactivity and a more diffused origination (the trend towards more diverse creators and providers of services) (cf. Bimrose/ Kettunen/ Goddard 2015; Watts 2001). Even though there is a growing need for online counselling services, most counselling systems in Europe still report a low number of customers compared to face-to-face counselling (Iacob 2012), so combinations of face-to-face counselling and ICT-assisted counselling are fostered. In most publications, emphasis is placed on a customer-centered holistic approach, supporting the mutual benefits of technology and human resources.

The spreading of digital technologies has influenced the development of career counselling and education guidance services in multifarious ways. Hooley, Hutchinson and Watts identify eight trends (2010, 2012) possibly shaping the future of career counselling:

1. Community: The internet is an important site for community interaction: technology has increasingly become a tool to facilitate a wide range of communication;
2. Collectivizing knowledge: A feature of many web 2.0 technologies is their ability to collectivize and aggregate the opinions of many;
3. Individualization: Users are increasingly able to tailor their usage of online content;
4. Recognizing time and place: Technologies are now enabling us to interact with the web in ways that recognize and identify time and place. This is particularly important for career development;
5. Located in the cloud: The way in which both applications and data are stored and delivered to the end-user is changing and is increasingly located off-site and with third-party providers;
6. Free or almost free: The cost of publication and development has dropped, enabling a wide variety of resources to be delivered at a much lower cost than in the past;
7. Diverse and integrated: The internet is increasingly integrated into a range of technologies across our lives. In particular, the convergence between telephone and web technologies opens up new opportunities for career learning;
8. Games: Computer gaming is gaining social relevance. It is important to explore the potential of both commercially produced games and educational games for the purpose of career learning.

The authors describe that ICT has generally been used to help meet learners' demand in one of three ways:

1. to deliver information;
2. to provide an automated interaction; or

3. to provide a channel for communication (cf. Hooley/ Hutchinson/ Watts 2010; 2012).

Other authors provide three similar main purposes for ICT in guidance counselling: 1) as a resource, 2) as a medium of communication, 3) for the development of material (knowledge can be stored online) (cf. Bimrose/ Kettunen/ Goddard 2015).

With internet and digital technologies a broad spectrum of possible sources of information is accessible to learners and counsellors the like. In this digital age acquiring information on adult education is no longer the issue in question but dealing with the amount of information. Thus, counselling needs to focus on helping learners to structure the available information and to find the right search channels. Counsellors need to adjust to the information learners themselves bring to counselling (cf. Engel et al. 2004: 41). At the same time inequality also transcends to the realm of information. In that sense counselling might have to bridge growing differences between learners who possess information on adult education and learners who cannot access digital sources of information (cf. Engel et al. 2004: 41).

According to Bahadir, the use of ICT in guidance and career counselling is very controversial among practitioners. On the one hand, some guidance counsellors consider ICT as a cheap and inefficient method, which could never replace the face-to-face advising. Others on the other hand, take into account ICT as a facilitator for providing guidance, which increases the efficiency of the services (cf. Bahadir 2012).

As a first step, guidance counselling services need to be assessed as to their degree of ICT-integration (very low – low – high – very high). The extent to which ICT has been integrated into service delivery and the extent to which the workforce are trained and supported in their use of ICT in their practice might differ and have to be separately assessed. Usually, workforce competence is lower than the general integration of ICT-assistance into service delivery (cf. Bimrose/ Kettunen/ Goddard 2015).

Five different functions of ICT have been identified specifically in guidance counselling (cf. Bimrose/ Kettunen/ Goddard 2015):

- delivering online guidance counselling;
- offering distance learning online;
- funneling users into the existing offline services;
- acting as a diversion by taking the pressure away from existing offline services that are in short supply;
- providing a forum for individuals to discuss with others or with practitioners.

In their study on adult education in Germany Schiersmann and Remmele (2004) found that ICT tends to play a supportive role for guidance counselling. Its relevance is especially high in

the realm of providing information to learners. Online media seems to be of less significance when more complex types of counselling are concerned. Schiersmann and Remmele propose the term "blended counselling", based on concepts of "blended learning", to denote counselling that mixes face-to-face encounters with digitally supported formats (Schiersmann/Remmele 2004: 91).

Frank Engel identifies two types of consequences for counselling that result from the growing importance of ICT: counsellors need to actively acquire trust of the already well-informed learners they counsel and they have to convert general information into applicable knowledge that can impact the learners on a practical level (cf. Engel 2004: 502).

Engel envisions that ICT has the potential to change how we talk about and conceptualize counselling due to the transformed possibilities of using space and time. He believes that new technology will give rise to new forms of communication that will in turn affect counselling practices (cf. Engel 2004: 503-504). Moreover, the employment of ICT will alter how providers of adult education create their public image, how they communicate with target audiences and how they position their products on the market of educational services. Engel imagines not only competition for clients but also competition between spaces of counselling – 'telepresence of counselling' (cf. Engel 2004: 501, 505). This might be especially relevant since providers or counselling increasingly have to acquire resources themselves and compete with other facilities for investors, grants and clients (cf. Nestmann et al. 2004: 600).

4. Counsellor research

4.1 Methodology: The problem centered interview and data basis

In order to assess specifically how mobile applications for guidance counselling have to be designed to benefit the work of guidance counsellors in adult education we bear on their experiences and expertise. By interviewing the counsellors that are supposed to efficiently work with the products devised by our project we will be able to ascertain how ICT can support guidance processes. Additionally, interviewing counsellors provides us with first-hand knowledge of guidance counselling as professional practice. Through our analysis of their experiences we will be able to devise strategies for marketing adult education services in order to enhance communication with target audiences.

Thus, we conducted interviews with selected counsellors of adult education and lifelong learning according to the method of the problem-centered interview devised by Andreas Witzel (2000). This face-to-face interview aims at generating personal accounts which focus mainly on a previously defined topic ("problem"). In our case this topic is guidance counselling in adult education. The focus on a specific area of interest constitutes the framework in which the accounts are unfolded. Yet by dialogically engaging with the interview partner this type of research tool is able to incorporate additional topics or aspects important to the interviewee. In this way, the interviews are characterized both by episodes of narration on the part of the interview partner as well as more interactive episodes that aim at understanding her / his views. Generally, the interviewer tries to create an atmosphere for open communication where the interview partner feels enticed to share her / his experiences and ideas. An interview guide that entails main questions to ask the interview partner (see Annex A1) is used to structure the conversation. At the same time the set of questions, its sequence, can be adapted in a flexible way (cf. Witzel 2000).

27 interviews with counsellors were conducted in total, five by each partner (seven in the case of Austria), in the period from November 2015 to January 2016. The interviews ranged from twelve to 75 minutes. All interviews were recorded – except for one where the recording was aborted after nine minutes due to technical problems. Notes were taken during the rest of this interview. All partners then transcribed main passages of the interviews in their national languages and subsequently translated the quotes to English. Per interview we transcribed at least one statement for each main question. The selection of statements followed the mentioned criteria of relevance, answer to our research questions and conciseness / depth. In a first step, the interviews were analyzed in their national context. Main themes and codes were developed to describe the interview material. In a second step, the interviews were analyzed comparatively, identifying key similarities and differences and deriving conclusions for the development of guidelines on mobile guidance counselling (IO 1 – A2).

The counsellor research in the different national contexts focused on specific fields of counselling within adult education specifically relevant for the participating organizations. Thus each partner selected a specific case (type of counselling service) they gained knowledge on. P1 researched counselling services at providers of adult education in Slovenia and conducted interviews with trained professionals who counsel and advise learners on adult education. P2 focused on student advisory services at a university which are offered by different departments and entities all intending to counsel students and prospective students, yet targeted at different types of learners and providing different forms of counselling. P3 conducted interviews with counsellors in two cooperating cities (two providers of adult education and a EURES advisor), taking a regional approach to describing counselling services. P4 focused on counselling services at local authority to unemployed adults over 18 and P5 researched career counselling as well, conducting interviews with public and private providers of national, regional and local scope.

Table 3: Interview conducted with counsellors:

Interview No.	Date	Duration	Country	Gender	Field of Practice
01	16.11.2015	59:49	AT	F	Counselling students at faculty service center of university
02	23.11.2015	54:47	AT	F	Counselling students at post graduate service center of university
03	23.11.2015	44:58	AT	M	Psychological counselling for students
04	24.11.2015	53:33	AT	F	Student advisory services at university
05	24.11.2015	47:41	AT	F	Counselling students at post graduate service center of university
06	26.11.2015	43:51	AT	M	Counselling students at students' council of university
07	26.11.2015	75:00	ES	M	Counselling at public administration (labor insertion and employment)
08	01.12.2015	52:49	AT	F	Counselling and marketing at postgraduate center of university
09	03.12.2015	66:24	ES	F	Counselling at foundation (labor intermediation and employment)
10	04.12.2015	recording 09:29	ES	F	Counselling at public employment service
11	04.12.2015	26:12	ES	F	Counselling at private training consultancy
12	15.12.2015	67:40	SI	F	Counselling at public university
13	15.12.2015	45:57	SI	F	Counselling at public university
14	17.12.2015	34:00	SE	M	EURES advisor (career guidance)
15	17.12.2015	24:00	SE	M	Teacher counselling students
16	18.12.2015	58:00	PT	F	Counselling at professional insertion office / local authority

17	18.12.2015	49:00	PT	F	Counselling at professional insertion office / private solidarity institution
18	18.12.2015	52:00	PT	F	Counselling at professional insertion office / local authority
19	18.12.2015	46:00	PT	F	Counselling at professional insertion office / private solidarity institution
20	21.12.2015	43:00	SE	M	Counselling students at high school
21	21.12.2015	51:29	SI	M	Counselling at public university
22	22.12.2015	12:00	SE	F	Counselling students at institution of adult education
23	22.12.2015	51:00	PT	F	Counselling at professional insertion office / local authority
24	24.12.2015	24:03	ES	F	Labor counselling at city council
25	07.01.2016	60:54	SI	M	Counselling at public university
26	08.01.2016	64:55	SI	F	Counselling at public university
27	13.01.2016	28:00	SE	M	Counselling students at senior secondary school

4.2 Arguments and Findings

In the following, we will present the main findings of comparatively analyzing the interviews with counsellors in Austria, Finland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Slovenia. First, we will describe the activities counsellors perform in order to sketch out what counselling entails on a very practical level. Secondly, we will give information on the persons that do the counselling, their educational backgrounds, work settings and individual perspectives. This leads up to demonstrating the counsellors' needs, which derive from their experiences. Then, we will turn to the side of the learners as imagined by the counsellors and describe what counsellors think learners need from counselling. Lastly, we will present the counsellors' ideas on ICT-assisted counselling.

4.2.1 What do counsellors do?

The counsellors we interviewed are involved in a broad variety of activities that range from informing and lending emotional support to supporting the learning experience, performing administrative tasks as well as leading projects or networking with stakeholders and sponsors. Counselling is described as a field that is "[v]ery broad and yes insofar somehow not possible to summarize, what it is, what, thus not not comprehensible, what it is precisely" (AT 04). Only very few interviewees spend their entire working day or even most of their working day counselling. Most have to combine counselling with a multitude of other tasks – some related to counselling such as processing information of the learners or doing research for the counselling sessions, but some also completely unrelated to counselling.

The following activities are described as key practices in guidance counselling:

- "a first diagnostic interview where we adjust what people are looking for" (ES 01);

- "a lot of doing research" (AT 02);
- "giving information" (PT 04);
- to "present different approaches on what he / she can do with his / her existing knowledge and skills, list out possibilities for financial aids" (SI 03);
- "mentoring" (ES 02);
- "support, emotional support" (ES 01);
- to "redirect people" (AT 05), to "pass them further" (SE 02);
- "training in skills" (ES 02);
- administrative tasks such as to "help fulfill application forms for enrolment" (SI 02) and "operational assistance" (SI 02).

This list is an indicator of how diverse counselling practice can be, with implications for the various skills and competences counsellors need to possess. Moreover, it becomes clear that counselling requires specific organizational settings – such as time and resources available for counselling each learner or networks of cooperation for redirecting learners to other service providers in case needed.

We identified different approaches to counselling among the interviewees, different ideas about what counselling is. Some counsellors see their role mainly as providers of information, evidenced by the characterization of counselling services as "information hub more or less" (AT 04). In their view, the main task is giving accurate information to learners, while lending emotional support is deferred to facilities of psychological counselling with employees who have specific psychological training. Other counsellors stress the difference between purely informing and doing guidance counselling:

> "I think the counselling is more complex, more complete, more durable than advice, I understand this as an advice to specific situations, more punctual. But of course, there are people who only seek advice and not the whole process of counseling … it depends." (ES 04)

Many of the counsellors interviewed found it impossible to split giving advice from lending emotional support. Counsellors need to give information and be well-versed in the subjects they are counselling on, while at the same time develop a personal relationship with the learner. Since the counselling situation is an interaction with learners as individuals, many counsellors find it neither possible nor sensible to exclude personal or emotional components. From analyzing the interview accounts we conclude that a distinction between thematic counselling and emotional counselling does not seem to make sense. Because

> "the work is based on human relations … so the human dimension in its relational condition plays an important role for the confidence, for the hope of those who are in a situation of unemployment." (PT 03)

Depending on the needs of the specific learner it is oftentimes required to lend emotional or even psychological support as well as assistance in areas of life that far exceed adult education – such as health or family issues. While these subjects might not originally be part of the counselling offered, they are highly relevant for the learners' attainment of adult education or for finding a job.

> "Well it, hm, the situation arises again that one should more often incorporate almost a a life counselling, what obviously though is not feasible. That is evident. But from time to time profound, hm, conversations unfold or where one just then at least can give input and say: Think into that direction. And then just in this way tries to support, that the people see clearer, which opportunities they have and just give them encouragement in that." (AT 07)

On the other hand there are clearly needs that exceed what counsellors can offer to learners, for example when people "already bring other psychological situations that we cannot provide in our services" (PT 01). Moreover, many counsellors are responsible for leading learners through administrative processes (i.e. related to labor market insertion or graduating) or even monitoring the learners' progress within these processes. If counselling is closely connected to process management, the counsellors need to fulfill a number of administrative tasks which impede an engagement with learners on an individualized level.

> "Derived from what we talked about, there is the large number of unemployed people we have and the bureaucratic treatment of people. What usually happens to people is that in some cases they are emotionally affected ... because many do not work, or because they have worked and suddenly they feel overwhelmed by the labor market, etc. ... and we do that, this is, bureaucratic treatments. Here we live in a country where we think that the solution is to provide these people with a course and this is really not the solution." (ES 01, 22:05-22:39)

Consequently, one central theme that emerges from the analysis is the question of demarcating guidance counselling within adult education from other forms of counselling and support. While there are no clear boundaries to be drawn, interviewees from time to time differentiate between counselling and psychological counselling, career counselling (and labor market insertion) and educational counselling as well as between informational services, process management or monitoring and counselling services.

From analyzing the interviews it becomes evident that counselling commonly aims at activating clients. Counselling tries to transform learners into or strengthen their image as active seekers of employment and educational opportunities. Learners shall be incited to develop their competences and design their own career and educational paths themselves. In this sense, one counsellor clarifies the key element of counselling:

> "Well to, to, to, start them off into this process and then push forwards the steps, that is our task in a way and not so much to tell someone now, what are the conditions in the field of

study XY concretely or, hm, also one can ordinarily not give reliable estimates, how it will then, hm, what career opportunities there will be for that then in five years of so, yes?" (AT 03, 05:42-06:12)

The interviewees state that counselling shall lead to "a progressive increase in the autonomy of the users [...] to generate new opportunities for access to employment" (ES 05). "When you yourself are used to search a lot on the web and know where the information is available, it is easy to do this job for the students, but they're supposed to do it themselves." (SE 03)

Nearly all interviewed counsellors report a high workload.

> "In the summertime, the stress. So that really really very very very many people come. So it, hm, when when 300 people wait at the infocentre and one sees, ok, so and so many numbers are, well a day, not in one hour, but you already see, ok, outside there is 45 people sitting, hm, and it does not get less, because as soon as I, I am done with someone, with a conversation, the next one has already drawn a number. The same on the telephone, so this can get a little stressful, when you see, ok, actually there are so and so many waiting and this one has been waiting for an hour or so or he has been waiting for ten minutes on the telephone. This is stressful for one personally." (AT 04, 33:05-33:40)

The high workload can impair the quality of counselling since "the guidance counsellor does not have resources to talk to people" (ES 01) and is compelled to quickly process one learner after the other. "[S]ometimes we do not have enough time for direct consulting work in order to offer more to participants" (SI 02). Especially in the context of labor market counselling interviewees use the term of being "overwhelmed" (ES 01; ES 02; ES 03) by the number of people needing services. The workload is exacerbated by the fact that counsellors need to have expertise on a broad set of topics. As one counsellors states: "Well, there is really a colorful mixture of everything in terms of inquiries." (AT 02, 15:11-15:15) On top, the channels where counsellors acquire information have diversified so that the interviewees find it difficult to stay current in the field of adult education or employment opportunities. One of the main problems they experience is to "be up to date with the constant changes in the labor market, training and existing resources" (ES 05). "[T]he market in the meantime has become too big. It is no longer possible to keep track. Neither for the people seeking counselling and needing it, nor for the ones that offer it." (AT 07, 19:09-19:27) The internet is named as most relevant source of information for counsellors.

Some counsellors criticize a lack of cooperation between different agencies involved in labor market counselling, providers of adult education and local communities.

> "Well, see, the first thing is the workload and the second one could be the lack of networking with other entities which may work with our same users and that you have no idea. In other words, we have a duplication of services ... I think that our

problems is much like this, much work that could be removed if we organize more with networking, which I think is our future." (ES 4, 15:09-15:40)

Enhanced cooperation is seen as one possibility to improve the quality of counselling, since

"[...] there is a huge amount of information available, but in reality most people in counselling cannot and probably never will be able to browse or choose amongst this information ... and then decide which way to take or which information is useful or not ... And this is why, of course, people need the counsellor or adviser at local, regional level that is familiar with local environment and recognizes the issues... it's nice, if a counsellor is behind that. And a good thing is if the counselling services are recognized by community. [...] Promoting a network of partner organizations, this means networking, is currently the only chance for a successful and a good job in counselling services." (SI 03, 17:26-24:22)

Next to the variety of activities performed by counsellors, there is also a range of formats in which counselling is being done:

"Well ... here we make individual sessions ... like a personalized interview ... are assessing the individual profile ... then also we do information sessions that passes through small group sessions and aims to inform what their duties and rights ... the current offers in the labor market ... and referral to training short or long term ... but above all our work will be about 70% in individual sessions." (Interview PT 02, 10:50-10:56)

"We have very many channels, now the fairs are now at once now face-to-face communication, where we, hm, stand there personally and can be responsive to the, hm, interests and state of knowledge, hm, of the respective person precisely as best we can or try to be responsive. Hm, then there are of course these, hm, as a manner of speaking impersonal channels now, which you just there have, well via internet, via brochures, hm, via information evenings now, hm, smaller events in a manner of speaking. Or where we only by publishing brochures are present and there well, this is also a channel of information." (AT 07, 04:50-05:30)

These different settings also lend themselves to different forms of counselling. Thus, counselling activities on the phone differ somewhat from counselling via email, in person or at fairs. Aside from individual counselling and counselling at fairs the interviewees also report group sessions where they inform or even train learners on specific issues which can range from how to do a job interview to strategies of learning or reducing anxieties taking exams.

We see a great variety of practices that figure as counselling. Concluding, we are able to say that the specifics of guidance counselling are heavily dependent on the institutional setting, the occupational field in question as well as the types of learners targeted. Guidance counselling cannot be described as a trade in itself but has to be seen as transversal activity connected to different professional fields in adult education. In some cases counselling is added to existing professional practices, as in the case of adult educators who counsel their

students or labor insertion officers who monitor processes but also counsel their clients. In other instances counselling has developed as a genuine task in the center of professional activity.

4.2.2   Who are the counsellors?

Even though all of the interviewed persons are involved in counselling on a daily basis, they exhibit quite different educational backgrounds, occupational profiles and working realities. Some counsellors are mainly administrative employees, some are adult educators who do counselling „on-the-side", some are trained for counselling and possess degrees in psychology or andragogy. These differences transcend to the type of counselling they offer. A Swedish teacher of adult education for example describes that teaching is his core competence, while he additionally engages in counselling or planning educational programs. Thus, counselling happens in the form of "conversations", "both during lessons as when we prepare skills tests" (SE 02). This depiction is quite different from the account of a Portuguese labor market officer who spends about three thirds of her day in individualized counselling sessions aiming at labor market insertion. She focusses on "assessing the individual profile" but also informing the clients on "their duties and rights ... the current offers in the labor market ... and referral to training short or long term" (PT 02). For a professional counsellor working for a Slovenian provider of adult education counselling concentrates on creating a meaningful relationship with the learner, making them feel that they "are well received", taking time to explore educational options fitted to the individual (SI 05).

While the interviewees display different degrees of professionalism, ranging from non-professional and para-professional to professional counsellors, lack of professionalization within guidance counselling is a central theme throughout the interviews. This lack of professionalization is identified as general issue not to be attributed to or solved by the individual counsellor.

> "I would say that it is not a problem of the counsellor, is a problem of the society, social, that affects us all and the problem is the professionalization. We do not consolidate what we know to do. From 1982 we know how to do things, right? ... The problem is that every time there is a political change ... they come and do some things that nobody knows. And I'm not talking about any political colour, I'm talking about all colours. That situation cannot be operative." (ES 01, 17:22 17:45)

The quoted counsellor believes the development of national guidance policy is flawed since it does not take into account first-hand experiences of long-term counsellors. Other interviewees wish for the advancement of general guidelines from national political bodies or professional organizations on how to design the counselling process. Moreover, professionalization needs to be tackled since counselling circumscribes a complex field that would benefit from institutional and methodological support which derives from professionalization:

> "It is complex because you need to have highly developed social skills so that the person is
> sincere with you and responds in a first interview various issues, more or less personal …
> and well, I also think that many analytical skills to make a proper, or at least one correct
> diagnosis. … Well, there are many issues to deal with, right?" (ES 04)

Next to the systematic development of counselling competences, a definition of clear occupational profiles seems warranted in order to differentiate counselling from other practices within adult education. Counsellors wish for a clarification on who does what so that learners know what to expect when they seek out counselling. Learners attending career counselling for example oftentimes expect the counsellor to afford them with a job. This expectation could be rectified by specifying the field of counselling – what it offers but also what it cannot achieve. A need for clearly differentiating tasks is exemplified in the following quote in which the interviewee distinguishes between counselling, labor market insertion services and psychological support:

> "Look, this is clear, counselling and guidance must always be associated with a service
> related to labor intermediation and it must be strong, real, with people, professionals who
> are doing professional prospecting and helping those people who have more difficulties."
> (ES 4, 14:34-15:01)

Professionalization is called upon as a process to spell out specific educational and occupational profiles for counsellors. These profiles would define key competences needed and in the following facilitate standards on professionally developing competences in the course of a career as counsellor. Moreover, profiles would enable a differentiation of areas of work, giving room for clearer and more realistic visions of what specific counselling services offer.

4.2.3 Needs of the counsellors

Following this perceived lack of professionalization a core need expressed by the counsellors is the professional development of skills and competences. It is specifically the emotional part of counselling, related to forging a personal relationship with the learner that needs training. One non-professional counsellor narrates that from time to time people drop by in his office who are so emotionally distraught that "one has to talk calmingly for ten minutes or so" (AT 06). He then tries to assure the learners that together they will come to a solution, although he himself is not certain, what the solution will be.

> "[…] in that case I believe it is important that there is someone sitting there and now I don't
> know how my colleagues resolve that somehow like, but, hm, don't know, I then like to take
> my time to talk about it at length, what is simply going on somehow or, how one could find
> something, that the, the person, that they really have a plan afterwards and not, that you
> get rid of them somehow." (AT 06)

Counsellors for the most part do not have the training to counsel on a more emotionally supportive level even though this is needed by the learners. This may result in counsellors being

overwhelmed and learners dissatisfied with their counselling experience. The need expressed by counsellors of clearly demarcating different types of counselling services might stem from the dilemma non- or para-professional counsellors experience in dealing with distressed clients.

> "But personally, sometimes there is a certain personal embarrassment. Each case is different and sometimes what happens on the individualized service that we realize … there is a whole range of problems that bind and have nothing to do with exclusive unemployed situation. Are situations that require other services." (PT 04, 16:44-16:46)

Professional experience as well development of competences to emotionally support learners greatly contribute to high quality counselling. As one counsellor explains specific skills are needed to create a trusted relationship between counsellor and learner. This trust is essential, "because otherwise if counsellor gives the impression that he cannot be trusted, then also the counselling won't be smooth, will not be good. […] So, it's not just consulting, so this is part of the deal of the Centre for Social Work and the Institute for Employment all mixed." (SI 04)

Professional skill development for counsellors is further needed in the area of communication – for the recruitment of learners, networking or acquiring sponsors. For example, "if you could have a simple review of PR training simply for us who have student contacts, so you have some ideas and tools how to best express things when marketing themselves, e.g. what to say or not." (SE 02)

A second area of needs that we identified is dealing with amount, diversity and ever changing nature of information (on adult education and the labor market). One counsellor admits that they "often also, hm, cannot give detailed information, because, hm, it is either so specific, we also do not know it" (AT 07). While in her opinion it usually suffices giving a general view to orient the learners, many counsellors are convinced that the quality of counselling hinges on the knowledge of counsellor. Their personal engagement and willingness to keep informed or actively do research is key for keeping an overview.

> "The problem is that due to the high number of people that we must attend, around 400, there is not a full knowledge of every company in the labor market. … We cannot be good labor counsellors if we do not know what happens in companies." (ES 01)

> "I use quite frequently the electronic office and there is also sometimes where I go to training centers to see a little what is going on to be up to date, if not, it would be impossible to carry out the counselling. And … well, I also contact with professionals in the area, this is essential. We work directly with networks with which we collaborate, networks of all types: business networks, collaboration networks, networks with the City Council, the Department of Employment." (ES 02)

This aspect ties in with the need for professional (skills') development. How can the quality of counselling be safeguarded in light of vastness, density and quick overturn of information?

Drawing from the experiences of counsellors following areas are in need of support – both in terms of professional development as well as regarding institutional backing:

- Counselling methods
- Communication methods and conflict management
- Psycho hygiene and supervision
- Internal communication processes
- Researching up-to-date information
- ICT-support of counselling processes (this aspect will be discussed in further detail under 4.2.4)

4.2.4 Perceived needs of learners

The learners that are counselled by our interviewees are described as entirely diverse. While labor market counsellors have more specific target groups, namely the unemployed (which still does not denote a very homogeneous group), learners counselled in adult education make up an even broader set of people: "em, unemployed, hm, employees, hm, highly educated, hm, young school leavers, older people" (SI 01).

From the view of the counsellors there is a lack of knowledge on "what is counselling" which leads to expectations that cannot be met in the counselling process. On the one hand, many learners do not seem to know about the benefits of counselling. Thus, counselling services need to be communicated to learners more effectively. Counsellors explicate that "people need to know what we are doing ... everything is now online, via the internet ... dissemination is important, such as the content" (SI 01). Especially in the realm of labor market and career counselling many clients only attend because they are obligated to. Lack of knowledge on counselling is in some contexts combined with a very bad image of labor market counselling and public employment offices. This leads to counselling services not being able to access relevant learners as well as clients approaching services with a negative attitude.

Secondly, learners are often disoriented due to information overflow. "It is surprisingly often I encounter young people where I ask them if they have looked at information on the different pages, but no, they have no idea that there is such a page." (SE 01) "All the information now available, it is perhaps a thousandth of what was on my time, not even that. Now it's hard to sift everything and embrace that which is of greatest importance." (SE 01) As consequence counsellors have to help learners find relevant information as well as to interpret acquired information. "They can't find the information they are looking for. Then I have to show them how they going to find it. Of course they need help. Of course they need help. This is obvious." (SE 05)

Thirdly, counsellors are under "the impression that people expect a, hm, very individual and personal care" (AT 01). While most of them express a very service-oriented approach towards

learners, they also notice a difficulty in dealing with passive attitudes. A counsellor speculates that "the autonomy [of learners, AR] d- decreases with, well it decreases as orientation towards service increases" (AT 01). This results in many questions being asked that could be answered by looking at the provider's homepage. This fact might be attributed to a passive attitude on the side of the learners, but it could also be connected to information overflow and difficulties learners have to find relevant materials.

In any case, a passive approach to counselling presents challenges for the counsellors:

> "Hm, yes, hm, the one thing is at times, in the more general counselling practice certainly when someone with and that happens during counselling prospective students quite a lot someone arrives with very passive expectations, roughly like, I would like to study something, tell me what I should study, no? Hm, that, hm, in that case you can help the least, makes you also rather aggravated, no, well because one so, hm, is so challenged in turn by that expectation to achieve something actually impossible, no, and the the counterpart tries to stay entirely oriented towards consuming. And to release someone from that at once and lead them to becoming active themselves, no, that that is surely something fairly difficult at times." (AT 03, 38:04-39:10)

Especially, if it is combined with wrong expectations regarding the possibilities of counselling.

> "I think that there is a common feeling that the counsellor is not going to help you … being a lot of people who think that going to a counselling session means that a counsellor is going to search you a job, and this is not the case." (ES 03)

As a result, counsellors need to engage in expectation management, managing to empower learners as active designers of their educational and career paths while at the same time working in a very service oriented way, helping learners to find a way through the thicket that is the market of adult education.

Asked what learners need, counsellors identify three key priorities: personal, individualized counselling, emotional assistance and counselling over distance. "Indeed, as we go forward in time, it would be necessary to include counselling through or with the help of ICT." (SI 04)

4.2.5 ICT assisted counselling – exploration of possibilities

ICT assisted counselling is a hot topic, not only in current scientific research, as depicted above, but it is also a subject of great importance for the counsellors interviewed. All of them see great potential in the integration of digital technologies to increase the counselling process' effectiveness and to save resources. Moreover, learners who cannot afford to travel to counselling sessions can be reached with web-based services. On top ICT-support affords more flexibility to counselling. The gains that derive from ICT support are uncontroversial among the counsellors we interviewed, as evidenced in the following quotes.

"Through ICT, I believe that counselling will be faster ... more efficiently ... without the need of the unemployed to move to a certain place and thereby reduce costs and gain access to all kinds of information related to job offers ... but above all access to training programs that elevates the soft skills of the individual and thus have greater employability." (PT 05, 15:39-15:46)

"I consider that ICT in today's society, where mostly unemployed people is located in big cities, which are very large spaces, with very large distances, so ICT can approach the counsellor to the user ... hm ... without the need of physical presence. This is a time saver, it is a cost savings and on the other hand, it is true that 60% of jobs are posted online so ... [...] It is easy to imagine some sessions through ICT as effective and less costly, and without physical movement." (ES 03)

Benefits of digitally supporting counselling are mentioned by every interviewee, yet the counsellors hold different views on how to integrate ICT. Some counsellors argue that the entire counselling process can take place online.

"[Y]es I believe that whole process can be integrated ... ourselves as counselors can play this role of articulation making the application intuitively easy to use and motivate them in this interaction." (PT 02)

"The online counselling and then well, finding sources of information, finding resources, everything related to links to web pages, specific counselling media: through guides, videos, virtual notebooks ... Well, a possibility that the user has to self-diagnose, as tests they filed and see the results, I don't know, self-help tools, and things of this kind." (ES 04)

Other counsellors see the potential of ICT in adding to face-to-face counselling, not replacing it. They believe that face-to-face interaction is a precondition for certain elements of the counselling process, i.e. creating a meaningful personal relationship with the learner. Thus, they envision online counselling as a complementary service, which performs additional functions to face-to-face counselling. In this view, for "the real advisory conversation, is by my opinion still needed the physical presence of both at the same time in the same place, if possible or they could see each other" (SI 03). Moreover, issues such as confidentiality or commitment to the counselling process on the side of the learner limit the field of application for online counselling.

"Hm, I cannot imagine an in-depth counselling because this is again questionable with regard to the protection of personal data and all the questions that are asked and all such, yes. Here I can be a little sceptical. Otherwise it could be more or less, what entry terms are concerned, what integration is concerned, the program is concerned, costs - because it's public, are not hidden, I think all of this could be solve a over the mobile applications." (SI 05)

When asked about their ideas how to design ICT-assisted counselling, creating an interactive dimension is very important to the interviewees. "And of course, these new tools are an

opportunity, in principle, if the two-way communication ... should then be fine, that this was a live image to see a man.... also skype variants, absolutely" (SI 03).

> "Well it would have to be an application that allows real-time communication for the user so that the user could raise concerns, which would allow an image to the user because it personalizes and gives another image when working with the user ... hm ... is that I think nothing too special is needed ... I think that a method of effective communication, nothing else is needed." (ES 03, 2:26-3:02.)

> "A traditional website with lots of body and information might not really speak to this younger generation. It needs to be more lively, a little more interactive as seen by this younger generation. ... That you can talk to someone on the side, Skype and so." (SE 03)

The counsellors came up with quite many ideas on how to integrate ICT into counselling. Aside from incorporating interactive elements, they talked about tools to systematize information, online forums for peer-to-peer exchange as well as communication between learners and counsellors and formats of online training or doing self-checks. Forms of online counselling should be user-friendly and visually appealing. Closing this chapter on the counsellors' views, we will list some of the ideas for ICT-assisted counselling the counsellors shared with us:

- "portals, that offer many different possibilities of inquiries, are connected with many other databases" (AT 07)
- "checklists, hm, what, hm, which questions do I have to ask myself, when I approach something, what do I need to think about" (AT 07)
- "mobile app [...] links to contents and many other hypertext links [...] with employment resources, linking with other people working in each particular area ... a reference person in the field of education, a person or a blog concerning new technologies, these kind of things" (ES 01)
- "communication channel, this is important ... our own whatsapp channel [...] instant messaging with people" (ES 01)
- "Well, I imagine a space similar to an online training platform. A space where there is room for more than one user, creating synergies and collaboration between two people who are looking for work and who need guidance. Also with the possibility of personalized and individualized exchanges between the counsellor and trainer and also a space with the possibility to share documents, information, news and others. Something very similar to what would be a platform for on-line training." (ES 03, 3:09-3:43)
- "guidelines for skype counselling, maybe ... this would be a challenge" (SI 02, 42:16-42:30)
- "the database where you can get all this information, yes. That he/she can directly and also immediately receive contacts from the one he / she needs" (SI 05)

5. Discussion

Guidance counselling in adult education denotes a broad variety of services, shaped by different national guidance systems and offered by a multitude of service providers. These services differ greatly in regard to methods used, aims and priorities of the counselling process and professional background of the counsellors. Focusing on the experiences of practicing guidance counsellors, we find different notions of what counselling entails – mainly providing learners with information, managing administrative processes, coaching and lending emotional support or producing analysis and diagnosis. We identified a legion of roles counsellors find themselves in, all associated with diverging requirements for designing the counselling situation.

Counsellors serve as:

- managers of information;
- managers of processes;
- experts of administration;
- narrators of explanations;
- short-term advisors;
- psychologists;
- counsellors as such.

Consequently, the question of demarcating different types of counselling services arises in order for counteracting wrong expectations on the side of the learners, but also for supporting the counsellors in performing their tasks.

There is a need for systematically developing educational and occupational profiles of counsellors in order to initiate professional development of skills and competences, not only since there are many non- or para-professionals working in the realm of counselling, but also to provide further methodological and organizational support to counselling staff. This need focuses in large part on the development of communication skills to deal with conflicts and emotionally distraught learners (psycho hygiene and supervision), but also to shape internal communication processes. Secondly, counsellors need competence development in the realm of counselling methods and, lastly, ways to deal with amount, diversity and ever-changing nature of information.

Regarding the support of counselling with ICT there is a difference between hesitations noted in the scanned literature and the positive attitude all interviewed counsellors expressed towards ICT support. Digital technology offers many areas of application that need to be explored further – such as supporting communication processes, providing new formats of educational and learning resources or offering possibilities to organize and store information.

ICT seems to be most beneficial as addendum to face-to-face counselling, giving way to forms of "blended counselling" (Schiersmann/ Remmele 2004: 91) to be delineated in future endeavors.

The following dimensions for creating the iYOT app derive both from desk research as well as from the interviews with guidance counsellors: type and focus of the content, the format of the experience the learner shall make, the interactive strategies and type of technology being used as well as the kinds of support being provided to the learners.

In order to develop and design the iYOT app as well as a training program attractive to guidance counsellors across EU-Member States, we recommend including the following five modules into the training program as well as the transversal issues mentioned.

Table 5: Training Modules

MODULES	M1: Educational Counselling	M2: Career Counselling	M3: Counselling & Communication Methods	M4: Recognition of non-formal Knowledge	M5: iYOT App
	Seeking educational opportunities	Career development	Counselling methods	...	Introducing the App
	Guidance for learning	Mock interviewing	A typical counselling process (phases)	...	Navigating through the App
	...	CV writing and self-presentation	Communicating with different learners' groups	...	Technological requirements
	...	Reflecting own career paths	...	...	Practice Session
	...	Handling critical career phases	...	...	...
		Job start support			
Trans-versal issues	Activating learners	Clearance and Referring people	Communication skills	Self-image as a guidance counsellor	Institutional requirement on the provider side
	Expectation management	Conflict resolution	Handling information overflow		

6. References

Bahadir, Mehtap. 2012. Virtual Guidance. In *JOBTRIBU new techologies for career guidance and mobility*. 66-69. EU: Bucharest.

Beck, Ulrich. 1992. *Risk society: Towards a new modernity*. London: Sage.

Bimrose, Jenny, Jaana Kettunen and Tannis Goddard. 2015. „ICT – the new frontier? Pushing the boundaries of careers practice." *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 43 (1): 8-23.

Brooks, Greg and Maxine Burton. 2008. *European adult learning glossary, level 2.* National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy. URL: http://www.pedz.uni-mannheim.de/daten/edz-b/gdbk/10/adultglossary2_en.pdf. (Accessed: 23.02.2016)

Cedefop. 2005. *Verbesserung der Politik und Systeme der lebensbegleitenden Bildungs- und Berufsberatung. Anhand von gemeinsamen europäischen Bezugsinstrumenten.* Luxemburg: Amt für amtliche Veröffentlichungen der Europäischen Gemeinschaften.

Cedefop. 2008. *Terminology of European education and training policy: a selection of 100 key terms.* Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. URL: https://www.google.at/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCoQFjAAah UKEwiy9aXd6cbIAhXDBiwKHRYJAO8&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.cedefop.europa.eu%2Ff iles%2F4064_en.pdf&usg=AFQjCNEfmpyRpBPXjHX6F0Oyc7nsVh2xQg&cad=rja. (Accessed: 23.02.2016)

Cedefop. 2016. URL: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en. (Accessed: 23.02.2016)

Chisholm, Lynne. 1994. *Determining the Need for Vocational Counselling among Different Target Groups of Young People over 28 Years of Age in the European Community, in Young Europeans and Vocational Counselling: what do young people need and want?* Berlin: CEDEFOP.

Commission of the European Communities. 2007. *Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Action Plan on Adult Learning.* COM (2007) 558 final. Brussels.

Council of the European Union. 2004. *Draft Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council on Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the field of Guidance throughout life in Europe.* 9286/04 EDUC 109 SOC 234. Brussels, 18 May 2004. URL: http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%209286%202004%20INIT. (Accessed: 23.02.2016)

Council of the European Union. 2008. *Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies.* 2008/C 319/02. URL: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/educ/104236.pdf. (Accessed: 23.02.2016)

El-Hussein, Mohamed Osman M. and Johannes C. Cronje. 2010. "Defining Mobile Learning in the Higher Education Landscape." *Educational Technology & Society*, 13 (3): 12-21.

Engel, Frank, Frank Nestmann and Ursel Sickendiek. 2004. „»Beratung« – Ein Selbstverständnis in Bewegung." In *Das Handbuch der Beratung. Band 1: Disziplinen und Zugänge.* Ed. by. Frank Nestmann, Frank Engel and Ursel Sickendiek, 33-44. Tübingen: dgvt-Verlag.

Engel, Frank. 2004. „Beratung und Neue Medien." In *Das Handbuch der Beratung. Band 1: Disziplinen und Zugänge.* Ed. by. Frank Nestmann, Frank Engel and Ursel Sickendiek, 497-509. Tübingen: dgvt-Verlag.

euro|guidance. Historical Overview of the Euroguidance Network. URL: http://euroguidance.eu/about-us/historical-overview/. (Accessed: 23.02.2016)

European Commission. 2001. *Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality: communication from the Commission.* COM (2001) 678 final, 21.11.2001. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.

European Commission. 2002. *Investing efficiently in education and training: an imperative for Europe: communication from the Commission.* COM (2002) 779, 10.01.2003. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.

European Commission. 2008. New Skills for New Jobs: Anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs. COM (2008) 868 final. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.

European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education. 2005. *The European Higher Education Area. Achieving the goals. Communiqué of the conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education.* Bergen.

European Union. 2011. *Transferability of Skills across Economic Sectors: Role and Importance for Employment at European Level.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

European University Association (EUA). 2008. *The European Universities' Charter of Lifelong Learning.* Brussels.

Gieseke, Wiltrud. 2000. "Beratung in der Weiterbildung – Ausdifferenzierung der Beratungsbedarfe." REPORT *Literatur- und Forschungsreport Weiterbildung*, Nr. 46: 10-17.

Gieseke, Wiltrud, Bernd Käpplinger and Sylvana Otto. 2007. „Prozessverläufe in der Beratung analysieren – Ein Desiderat. Begründung und Entwicklung eines Forschungsdesigns." *REPORT: Zeitung für Weiterbildungsforschung*, 1: 33-42.

Göksu, Idris and Bünyamin Atici. 2013. „Need For Mobile Learning: Technologies and Opportunities." *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 103: 685-694.

Hooley, Tristram, Jo Hutchinson and A.G. Watts. 2012. "Careering through the web." In *JOBTRIBU new techologies for career guidance and mobility*. 15-22. EU: Bucharest.

Hooley, Tristram, Jo Hutchinson and A.G. Watts. 2010. *Careering Through The Web The potential of Web 2.0 and 3.0 technologies for career development and career support service*s. UK: Commission for Employment and Skills.

Iacob, Mihai. 2012. "The use of ICT in delivering counselling services: a Europe wide survey." In *JOBTRIBU new techologies for career guidance and mobility*. 7-12. EU: Bucharest.

Institute of Guidance Counsellors. 2016. *Our History. As It Was In The Beginning - A Brief History Of The IGC.* URL: http://www.igc.ie/About-Us/Our-History. (Accessed: 23.02.2016)

Käpplinger, Bernd and Cornelia Maier-Gutheil. 2015. „Ansätze und Ergebnisse zur Beratung(sforschung) in der Erwachsenen- und Weiterbildung – Eine Systematisierung." *Zeitschrift für Weiterbildungsforschung*, 38: 163-181.

Köditz, Volker. 1990. *Vocational guidance and counselling for adults.* C Abridged version of the summary report Berlin, 7 and 8 December 1989. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Kraatz, Susanne. 2015. Reform of educational systems: European policies for lifelong guidance to fight early school leaving and unemployment. Briefing. URL: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/536318/IPOL_BRI%282015%29536318_EN.pdf. (Accessed: 23.02.2016)

McCarthy, John. 2007. "Catapulted to the Front: Career Guidance in European Union and International." *REPORT,* 30 (1): 43-50.

National Guidance Forums Report. 2007. *Guidance for Life. An Integrated Framework for Lifelong Guidance in Ireland.* URL: http://www.nationalguidanceforum.ie/documents/NGF_Guidance_for_Life%20final.pdf. (Accessed: 23.02.2016)

Nauta Aukje, Annelies van Vianen, Beatrice van der Heijden, Karen van Dam and Marja Willemsen. 2009. „Understanding the factors that promote employability orientation: The impact of employability culture, career satisfaction, and role breadth self-efficacy." *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology,* 82 (2): 233-251.

Nestmann, Frank, Ursel Sickendiek and Frank Engel. 2004. „Statt einer »Einführung«: Offene Fragen »guter Beratung«." In *Das Handbuch der Beratung. Band 2: Ansätze, Methoden und Felder.* Ed. by. Frank Nestmann, Frank Engel and Ursel Sickendiek, 599-608. Tübingen: dgvt-Verlag.

Nollmann, Ulrike. 2010. „Wie kann Beratung gelingen?" In *Bildungsberatung. Eine Einführung für Studierende.* Ed. by Anne Schlüter, 39-47. Opladen & Farmington Hills, MI: Verlag Barbara Budrich.

OECD/European Union. 2004. *Career Guidance. A Handbook for Policy Makers.* Paris. URL: http://www.oecd.org/edu/innovation-education/34060761.pdf. (Accessed: 23.02.2016)

Plant, Peter and Rie Thomsen. 2011. Career guidance in Denmark: Social control in a velvet glove. *Orientación y Sociedad*, 11: 1-17.

Schiersmann, Christiane and Heide Remmele. 2004. *Beratungsfelder in der Weiterbildung. Eine empirische Bestandsaufnahme.* Schneider Verlag Hohengehren GmbH: Baltmannsweiler.

Schiersmann, Christiane and Heinz-Ulrich Thiel. 2004. „Beratung in der Weiterbildung." In *Das Handbuch der Beratung. Band 2: Ansätze, Methoden und Felder.* Ed. by. Frank Nestmann, Frank Engel and Ursel Sickendiek, 891-906. Tübingen: dgvt-Verlag.

Schlüter, Anne. 2010a. „Bildungsberatung eine Einführung." In *Bildungsberatung. Eine Einführung für Studierende.* Ed. by Anne Schlüter, 9-15. Opladen & Farmington Hills, MI: Verlag Barbara Budrich.

Schlüter, Anne. 2010b. „Die Weiterbildungslandschaft – Tätigkeitsfelder und Orte der Erwachsenenbildung und Bildungsberatung." In *Bildungsberatung. Eine Einführung für Studierende.* Ed. by Anne Schlüter, 19-29. Opladen & Farmington Hills, MI: Verlag Barbara Budrich.

Seddon, Terri and Suzanne Mellor. 2006. "Making citizens: From belonging to learning." In *Homo sapiens Europaeus: Creating the European learning citizen.* Ed by Michael Kuhn and Ronald G. Sultana, 189-220. New York: Peter Lang.

Sultana, Ronald G. 2004. *Strategien zur Bildungs- und Berufsberatung. Trends, Herausforderungen und Heransgehensweisen in Europa.* Ein Synthesebericht des Cedefop. Luxemburg: Amt für amtliche Veröffentlichungen der Europäischen Gemeinschaften.

Sultana, Ronald G. 2008. F*rom policy to practice: A systemic change to lifelong guidance in Europe.* Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP.

Watts, A.G. 1992. *Occupational profiles of vocational counsellors in the European Community.* Berlin: Cedefop.

Watts, A.G. 2000. "The new career and public policy." In *The future of career.* Ed. By Audrey Collin and Richard A. Young, 259-275. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Watts, A.G. 2001. "Career guidance and social exclusion: a cautionary tale." *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling,* 29 (2): 157-176

Watts, A.G., Sultana, Ronald G. and John McCarthy. 2010. "The involvement of the European Union in career guidance policy: a brief history." *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance* 10 (2): 89-107.

Witzel, Andreas. 2000. "The Problem-Centered Interview." *FQS Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum Qualitative Social Research*, 1 (1), Art. 22. URL: http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1132. (Accessed: 23.02.2016)

7.   Annex

A1   Interview guide

Interview:

Date: Duration:

Name of interview partner:
Type of institution he/she works for:
Profession and field of work:
Years of experience in the field of counselling:
Type of counselling he/she offers:
Gender:
Age:
Nationality:

Interview questions:

1   *First, I would like to get a feel for your field of work and your everyday working experiences as a guidance counsellor. Please, tell me a little bit about where you work, your tasks and what you do on a daily basis.*

translation:_____
_____
_____
_____

2   *Now, I would like to know what kind of counselling services there are in your organization? Please, describe in some detail how guidance counselling is done.*

translation:_____
_____
_____
_____

3   *I am very much interested in your personal experiences and views on guidance counselling. How would you assess the existing services?*

translation:_____
_____
_____
_____

4   *How do you find your clients?*

translation:_____
_____
_____
_____

5   *Now, please imagine you are a client of yours. What do you think clients need from guidance counselling?*

translation:_____
_____
_____
_____

6   *In our project, we are interested in how information and communications technology (ICT) can be used to support guidance counsellors working in the field of adult education. We would like to think of ways how guidance can be done over distance so as to reach a diverse group of potential adult learners and to assist them in their learning activities.*

     How do you imagine to purposefully integrate ICT into your counselling practice?

translation:_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

7   *Are there any aspects that are important to you that we did not cover in this interview?*

translation:_____
_____
_____
_____