

Guiding Cities

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Intellectual Outputs 01

State of the Art



Project information

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O1/A1 - Analysis of guidance activities

Objective:

The GCities consortium will analyze the current state of guidance activities within their context. The analysis will collect information, data and description of services about: types of services, guidance services specifically directed at ESL or those at risk of ELS, targeted services for other specific groups, actors involved in the organization and implementation of guidance activities.

Short description of your context

Greece is a country of almost 11.000.000 citizens. The first attempt of the Greek state to provide vocational guidance services to Greek citizens was made in 1950. The effort was undertaken by the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED), but soon faded and abandoned. In 1976, school vocational guidance was introduced in the educational curriculum, until nowadays it is a lesson for the students in 3rd class of Gymnasium. In 1997 the centers of career guidance KESYP and the school vocational guidance offices (GRASEP) were created, which were staffed by trained teachers and serve the students under the supervision of the department of Career Guidance (CG) of the Ministry of Education, while the Ministry of Labour provided CG services through OAED and institutions for special groups. In 1997 the National Centre for Vocational Guidance (EKEP) was also established which was incorporated into the National Certification Organization and Vocational Guidance [E.O.P.P.E.P] in 2011. From 1999 till 2010 career guidance in Greece was well organized, and operated at a satisfactorily level providing service both to students of schools and universities and to unemployed as well with great results. Unfortunately, in the last 4 years, Career Guidance Services have been reduced due to the financial crisis, but there are still attempts for its sustainability.

Governance and coordination

1) Is there an area or department that has the responsibility to coordinate the services and/or resources that are offered in the field of guidance in the city/region/country? If so, which area or department?

In Greece the responsibility for administering career guidance services in the fields of education and employment lies with the Ministry of Education & Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Labour, Social Security & Welfare, through the activities of EOPPEP. EOPPEP is the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance, an all-encompassing statutory body investing on better quality and more efficient & reliable lifelong learning services in Greece.

EOPPEP operates under the supervision of the Minister of Education & Religious Affairs, Culture & Sports and is seated in Athens. It has derived from the amalgamation of three national bodies, all under the supervision of the same Ministry: the National Centre for the Accreditation of Lifelong Learning Providers (EKEPIS), the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications (EOPP) & the National Centre for Vocational Guidance (EKEP).

At the national level, E.O.P.P.E.P. is responsible for:

- providing scientific and technical support to the relevant stakeholders in the Ministries of Education and Employment in designing and implementing a National Policy on Guidance and Counselling,
- the development of communication and coordination of actions taken by private and public counselling and guidance service providers, aiming at the improvement of existing services,
- the education, initial and continuous training of counselling and guidance practitioners, in collaboration with/or supplementing those provided by current training services in the relevant Ministries of Employment and Education,
- defining the conditions and rules under which guidance and counselling services should operate, the relevance and adequacy of counselling and guidance practitioners' qualifications and keeping the relevant registers,
- designing and implementing actions of counselling and guidance supporting the work of counselors and of lifelong support of citizens for development and career management,
- participating in the formulation of standards, rules and procedures for quality assurance consulting services and guidance under the National Quality Framework for lifelong learning.

2) Which actors provide guidance in your country? Who are the main actors/stakeholders?

The main stakeholders that provide guidance in Greece are:

In the field of education: the Ministry of Education - through the department of Vocational Guidance and Educational Activities and through the Pedagogical Institute's Sector of School Vocational Guidance.

In the field of Employment, the responsible body is the OAED, an organisation of the Ministry of Labour, which is responsible for issues of employment, including equality between men and women. More specific responsibilities of the organisation include, among other things, protection of special groups in employment, public employment services, free movement of European Union workers, employment of workers from third countries, and some aspects of human resource development.

There is also the NGO called IEPAS – Institute for Career Guidance & Counseling that is responsible for:

- conducting research on the conditions and rules of counselling services operation
- designing and implementing actions of counselling and guidance supporting the work of counselors
- designing the formulation of standards, rules and procedures for quality assurance consulting services and guidance
- Implementing career guidance programs

3) Is there any coordination between the different actors that provide guidance in your country? If so, please describe.

As far as the services, or the personnel of the different actors are concerned, there is no central coordination between the different actors, as they belong to different Ministries. These two Ministries, however, do administer their services through EOPPEP. In this respect, EOPPEP acts as the coordination body, implementing systemic guidance interventions, which ensures the quality provision and the professionalization of career guidance, the networking among the different guidance stakeholders and the constant development of information, guidance and counselling tools and material for the guidance practitioners working in education and employment settings in the public and private sector.

Resources

4) Is there a specific space and/or website where the guidance actions, services, resources....of the city/region/country are collected? If so, which is it?

The website of EOPPEP is the one where guidance actions are collected. The website <http://eoppep.gr/> provides information on guidance, employment support & other information services in Greece.

The site includes an Interactive Guidance Portal for adolescents and youngsters www.eoppep.gr/teens and Lifelong Career Development Portal <http://e-stadiodromia.eoppep.gr/>

Information is also provided for tertiary education students (career services in Universities & Technological institutions)

The website is not fully informed though and whoever needs information has to search in several sites, according to the target group to which he/she belongs, or the kind of information the person is interested in receiving.

Another website with information for the unemployed is www.oaed.gr

5) Which agents/institutions offer guidance services and/or resources to citizens? Who are the users/clients and which type of services and/or resources do they offer?

Career guidance services are offered in Greece by:

Public institutions (centers under the supervision of the Minister of Education & Minister of Labour)

- KESYP: Career guidance centers for pupils. Their clients are teenagers, students in high school and the services they provide deal with Information on studies and in some cases psychometric tools of vocational guidance
- Career Offices/Internship offices in Universities: In the field of Tertiary, Education Career Liaison Offices, Internship Offices and Innovation and Entrepreneurship Units operate in Universities and Technological Educational Institutions, with the aim to support students and graduates in the transition phase from education to employment. Services offered include liaison with the labour market, opportunities to meet with potential employers during Career Days, provision of information about postgraduate studies and scholarships in Greece and abroad, individualized and group counselling to enhance the students' career management skills.
- Center of Career Guidance on University of Athens: Its clients are students in University and teachers and delivers services dealing with information on post graduate studies , preparation for job search or methodologies on CG for counselors
- Center of CG for disabled of the Pedagogical Institute: Its clients are people with disabilities, or social vulnerable groups and they provide the services of cg counseling, information on jobs and studies.
- Employment office of KEPEA: The clients are unemployed, employees and employers. The unemployed and the employees register their CV, to seek for work and to learn about calls for employment and training seminars programs. Likewise, employers are able to seek personnel through the database.
- Vocational Training Centers of OKANA. Their clients are person detoxifying of having detoxified and their objective is to provide training and specialisation in several professions, so as to smoothly reintegrate them in society and in the labour market. Besides vocational training, trainees can get in touch with employer organizations, benefit from job moderation, get advice on starting/running/joining a business/company or on legal, insurance, tax etc. matters.
- KETHEA's training center: They address to addicted persons by offering information services, counselling, mental rehabilitation, education and training, social reintegration and employment.

- Second Chance Schools of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs offer support services to their students who are citizens over 18 years old, who haven't completed the obligatory secondary education. The services are provided by a guidance counselor and a psychologist, emphasizing in the development of personal skills, support for career and social enhancement of the students and facilitation to entering the labour market
- OAED (manpower employment organisation): the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED - Greek PES) is the public authority supervised by the Ministry of Labour, Social Security & Welfare managing Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) for halting unemployment, promoting employment, and vocational training for both unemployed and employed citizens. OAED is also responsible for the unemployment insurance measures (regular unemployment benefit) and other social security benefits and allowances as well as for the provision of initial vocational education combined with work practice/traineeship (Apprenticeship system). The above mentioned policies are enhanced with employment guidance services especially to the unemployed in order to support their labour market inclusion. These services include career guidance, career management - job searching techniques, entrepreneurial counselling. Employment mobility information and support is provided by OAED as part of the EURES services.

Private institutions & freelancer counselors: They cope with all type of clients and of all ages. These institutions combine diagnostic – psychometric tools of career guidance with counselling and information on studies and jobs and they prepare unemployed for getting a job, through services like career guidance, career management - job searching techniques, entrepreneurial counselling.

6) Are there services specifically directed at Early School Leavers (ESLs) or those at risk of Early School Leaving? If so, what type of services are offered and by what type of agents/institutions?

Although lots of studies have been done in Greece on ESL, there are no specific services for ESL. Though there are several programs that could benefit ESLs as well. To be specific, there are programs organised by University of Athens and Thessaly, that addressed to children of Roma, Pomaks and Muslims, which aim primarily at supporting and enhancing the access, regular attendance and progress of those children (those at risk of early school leaving), including disabled children, at school in the lines of an inclusive paradigm that promotes equal, qualitative and fair participation in school. Additionally, children receive, except for academic, socio-cultural support as well, inside and outside of school.

Policies

7) Has the city/region/country incorporated guidance in its governance plan (as a strategy, action...)? If so, in what way?

The Greek government has provided the methodology, structures and guidance services to be provided both in structures under the supervision of Ministry of Education, and in organizations dealing with unemployment under the supervision of Ministry of Labour. There have been structured action plans that would be the guide for the implementation of Career Guidance Services in public sector, but because of the financial crisis, it is not feasible to apply all these actions in practice and as a result part of these are being implemented and it seems that Career Guidance services are not, for the moment, the government's priority, but lots are left to private initiatives.

Technologies

8) How would you describe (in a broad overview) the weight or percentage of services that are delivered through ICT versus face-to-face methodologies?

Though ICT prove to be helpful and operate constructively in the Career Guidance Services, they still remain not fully reclaimed by CG practitioners and it is more limited than face-to-face interactions. Speaking with numbers, services that deal with information on studies, job etc are delivered 50% by ICT and 50% by face to face methodologies, but on whatever concerns counselling services, then the percentage of face-to- face methodologies climbs up to 80%.

Best practices and experiences

9) Are there any projects or initiatives that can be of interest to the Guiding Cities project: focused on benchmarking, coordination of guidance services in a community or reducing early school leaving?

In Greece the main projects that contribute to the reduction of early school leaving are those that, as already mentioned, are being organised by the Universities of Athens, Thessaloniki and Thessaly and address to children of Roma, Pomaks and Muslims.

Apart from these programs, that could act preventively, there are programs that could benefit ESLs indirectly. For example, the Second Chance Schools on Ministry of Education provide opportunities for adults, 18 years and older who have not completed the nine-year compulsory education to continue their studies and obtain a diploma equivalent to the Certificate of High School. There is also the evening education that continues to serve an important – role, as it offers educational opportunities to those working people who failed to join "timely" and smoothly in the educational process.

Another program that could help, is the project School for Parents organised by the Ministry of Education and supports parents so they can meet with success in their complex and difficult role, aiming to Improve communication within the family, promote the knowledge of parents regarding the psychological, social, spiritual and other needs of children at each stage of development, develop skills for the early diagnosis and treatment of difficult behaviors of their children, parental involvement in school activities encourage and support cooperation with / educators, acquire specific skills so that parents can help their children cope with the demands of kindergarten, primary and secondary schools, etc.

Several programs are also organized by the Minister of Labour, whose target groups are unemployed of low qualifications, or vulnerable social groups, or people over 55 of low education level, to whom is offered training on acquiring specific skills (like computer use), counseling on career management and therefore reintegration in the market.

10) Any other comments which are important to understand the state of the art of guidance services in your context, especially in reference to Early School Leaving?

There are several ideas, methodologies, action plans referring to career guidance services, but only a small portion of them are being implemented widely, and many actions are left to private initiatives.

Professional profiles and training

11) Who can be a guidance practitioner and provide guidance services in your context?

In Greece a guidance practitioner can be anyone with a bachelor degree on either education, social or financial sciences and further training in career guidance. Unfortunately, as there is no standardized qualification for professional career counselors, and various certificates are offered nationally by public and private sectors as well, there are a lot of people who provide guidance services.

12) What type of initial and continuous training is provided to guidance practitioners?

Initial training in career counselling is given on post graduate level. There are 4 post graduate programs on CG: 1. Graduate Program in Counseling & Career Guidance by the University of Athens, 2. Graduate Program in Development and Career Counseling, by University of Patras, 3. Graduate Program in Counseling & Career Guidance by ASPAITE and 4. Graduate Program "Counselling in Special Education, Education and Health" at the University of Thessaly.

Apart from these programs there are several training programs organised either by universities, or colleges, or by private institutions dealing with CG, which duration ranges from 30 hours to 1 year.

Evaluation

13) How are guidance services evaluated in your context?

In Greece, there is not an evaluation system for CG services and as a result those services are not being evaluated in the public sector. On the other hand, on the private sector, evaluation includes questionnaires given to the clients (students, parents, unemployed, employers) at the end of the program, where they write down their experience on the methodology, the tools that were used, the counsellor and how much they get benefit from this service, giving as well their proposals for changes and improvement. According to these results, the private institutions try making the appropriate improvements on their services.

O1/A2 - Focus groups

Short presentation of your focus group

The focus group in Greece was carried out on Friday, 27th February 2015 in Ison Psychometrica's office in Athens.

The participants were 12 representing 6 main stakeholders in Greece: EOPPEP, IEPAS, Department of Education and Guidance of Ministry of Education, University of Athens, ASPAITE & ELESYP. Representatives of the Gymnasium of Thrakomadedones also participated. The dialogue was fruitful and we came up with several proposals on the project.

➤ List and description of participants

Name	Role	Organisation	Address	E-mail
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Kontogianni Vivi	Teacher	Gymnasium of Thrakomakedones	Pappa Emanouil st, Thrakomakedones	kontogianni@shc.gr

➤ **Staff member involved**

In the focus group, on behalf of Ison Psychometrica, 3 staff members were involved: Mary Tountopoulou and Elli Anitsi, who are career counsellors, and Nikos Stathopoulos who is the Manager.

➤ **Report on the information collected**

(A summary, following the 10 questions of the guidelines)

Taking into account the discussion between the members of the focus group it came up that though there are several actors providing career guidance services, at the end little is done. All of the participants agreed on the fact that greek government has provided the methodology, the structures and guidance services to be provided both in structures under the supervision of Ministry of Education, and in organizations dealing with unemployment under the supervision of Ministry of Labour, but because of the financial crisis, it is not feasible to apply all the planned actions in practice and as a result only part of these are being implemented and it seems that Career Guidance services are not for the moment government's priority, but lots are left to private initiatives.

It is also agreed that the responsibility for administering career guidance services in the fields of education and employment lies with the Ministry of Education & Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Labour, Social Security & Welfare, through the activities of the NATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF QUALIFICATIONS & VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE (EOPPEP) (www.eoppep.gr). In this respect, EOPPEP acts as the national **coordination body**, implementing systemic guidance interventions, which ensures the quality provision and the professionalization of career guidance, the networking among the different guidance stakeholders and the constant development of information, guidance and counselling tools and material for the guidance practitioners working in education and employment settings in the public and private sector. In addition, innovating guidance services for the end users of all ages are also developed within the activities of EOPPEP at national level.

The **main stakeholders** that provide guidance is the Ministry of Education - through the department of Vocational Guidance and Educational Activities and through the Pedagogical Institute's Sector of School Vocational Guidance and OAED, an organisation of the Ministry of Labour, which is responsible for issues of employment, including equality between men and women. There is also the NGO called IEPAS – Institute for Career guidance & Counseling that is responsible for making research on the conditions and rules of counselling services operation, designing and implementing actions of counselling and guidance supporting the work of counselors, designing the formulation of standards, rules and procedures for quality assurance consulting services and guidance and implementing career guidance programs

The participants were coming either from public institutions or from private and therefore they could analyze all the **institutions that offer career guidance** services

in Greece. Specifically, among public institutions that operate under the supervision of Minister of Education are the KESYP and GRASEP that offer services to students in high school, the Career Offices/Internship offices in Universities aiming to support students and graduates in the transition phase from education to employment. Center of Career Guidance on University of Athens, whose clients are students in University and teachers, Center of CG for disabled of the Pedagogical Institute, that deals with people with disabilities, or social vulnerable groups and Second Chance Schools which offer support services to their students who are citizens over 18 years old, who haven't completed the obligatory secondary education.

There are also institutions that are under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour, such as Employment office of KEPEA, whose clients are unemployed, employees and employers, Vocational Training Centers of OKANA, that address to persons detoxifying of having detoxified and KETHEA's training center, that deals with addicted persons. But the main organization of the Ministry of Labour is OAED (manpower employment organization) which is responsible for halting unemployment, promoting employment, and vocational training for both unemployed and employed citizens. The above mentioned institutions, offer to the unemployed in order to support their labour market inclusion by providing them with career guidance, career management - job searching techniques, entrepreneurial counselling.

Apart from the public sector, there are several private institutions and freelancers offering CG services to all all type of clients and of all ages. These institutions combine diagnostic – psychometric tools of career guidance with counselling and information on studies and jobs and they prepare unemployed for getting a job, through services like career guidance, career management - job searching techniques, entrepreneurial counselling.

It should be mentioned that the participants agreed that among all those actors and institutions, there is no **central coordination** between them, as they belong to different Ministries or are private, but most of them use the methodologies that EOPPEP provide them with.

As far as **the Early School Leavers** are concerned, it is said that although there have been done lots of studies on ESL in Greece, there are no specific services for them. Though there are several programs that could benefit ESLs as well, like the Programs organised by University of Athens and Thessaly, that addressed to children of Roma, Pomaks and Muslims, which aim was primarily to support and enhance the access, regular attendance and progress of those children(that risk early school leaving), including disabled children, at school in the lines of an inclusive paradigm that promotes equal, qualitative and fair participation in school.

Technology and resources of Career Guidance services

Most of the participants insisted on the fact that though ICT prove to be helpful and operate constructively in the Career Guidance Services, still remain not fully reclaimed by CG operators and is more limited than face-to-face interactions.

Speaking with numbers, services that deal with information on studies, jobs etc are delivered 50% by ICT and 50% by face to face methodologies, but on whatever concerns counselling services, then the percentage of face-to- face methodologies climbs up to 80%.

Talking about tools and resources of CG, a counselor, teacher and student may search for them in the website of EOPPEP, but unfortunately this doesn't include all the necessary information and tools someone may be looking for, and as a result whoever needs information and something specific on CG has to search in several sites, according to the target group he/she belongs to, to get what he/she wants.

Professional profile, training & evaluation

The members of the focus group were in agreement that in Greece there is no standardized qualification for professional career counsellors and the title "career counselor" is unregulated, although various certificates are offered nationally. Usually, a guidance practitioner can be anyone with an academic background on psychology and educational sciences, sociology and other sciences, having further training in career guidance. Initial training in career counselling is given on post graduate level. There are 4 post graduate programs on CG: 1. Graduate Program in Counseling & Career Guidance by the University of Athens, 2. Graduate Program in Development and Career Counseling, by University of Patras, 3. Graduate Program in Counseling & Career Guidance by ASPAITE and 4. Graduate Program "Counselling in Special Education, Education and Health" at the University of Thessaly. Apart from these programs there are several training programs organised either by universities, or colleges, or by private institutions dealing with CG, which duration ranges from 30 hours to 1 year.

As for the evaluation of Career guidance services, there is not a specific evaluation system and as a result those services are not being evaluated in the public sector. On the other hand, there is evaluation on the private sector, which includes questionnaires given to the clients (students, parents, unemployed, employers) at the end of the program, where they express their experience and the degree to which they got benefit. According to the results of these evaluations, the private institutions try making the appropriate improvements on their services.

Best practices and experiences

The participants shared several initiatives and programs that have been implemented that could be described as best practices and experiences on the prevention of ESL and in general in the Career Guidance. The main projects are being organised by the Universities of Athens, Thessaloniki and Thessaly and address to children of Roma, Pomaks and Muslims by providing specialized education to teachers, psychological support to students and support on the learning process.

Other best practices, include the Second Chance Schools on Ministry of Education provide opportunities for adults, 18 years and older and the evening education that continues to serve an important – role, as it offers educational opportunities to those working people who failed to join "timely" the educational process.

Furthermore, School for Parents organised by the Ministry of Education is a positive action as it supports parents, while there are several programs under the supervision of the Minister of Labour, whose target groups are unemployed of low qualifications, or vulnerable social groups, or people over 55 of low education level, to whom is offered training on acquiring specific skills (like computer use), counseling on career management and therefore reintegration in the market.

➤ **Emerging needs and priorities of the group**

(What the guidance system and the practitioners/teachers need to provide better guidance services in your context)

Taking into consideration the weaknesses of the career guidance system as it is being implemented in Greece, the members of the focus group proposed several ideas for improvement. First and foremost, they all recognized the need for establishment of the specialty of the Career Counselor, so as CG services to be offered by trained and experienced on CG counsellors. There is also the need to enter the Vocational Guidance in schools, from primary schools to lyceums, as a service that could enable students to get self –knowledge, develop their skills and interests and be aware of the educational and vocational alternatives.

Furthermore, it was suggested that there should be research on the needs of the local market labour, so as to give more emphasis on the technical education and to guide students that do not succeed in school to more practical training, in order to avoid leaving school. Regarding students who leave early school, the proposal was to write down the characteristics of those children, the reasons that lead to this choice and according to these, trying to develop a program or methodology to being implemented in schools for students, including development of skills, interests, improvement of self-esteem, and for their parents as well.

Lastly, there was suggested that there should be a psychologist in each school, so as to identify which students face problems at school and seem to be prone to early school leaving, and to take actions supporting students in coping with their difficulties.

➤ **Conclusions (your comments, conclusions and integrations)**

The focus group came into the conclusion that in the Greek context, career guidance and its services are well designed, but owing to the financial crisis, they aren't being implemented to the degree it should be, so as to bring satisfactory results. Occasionally, new programs and methodologies come into effect, that deal with students and especially with students that are in risk of leaving early school, but still there are lot to be done so as to address the phenomenon. The members of the group came up with the hope that this project will develop the methodology that could help teachers and counselors dealing with early school leaving and were keen to contribute to its success in any way they could.