

The impact study presents a series of guidelines on how and why to use the Guiding Cities Model and the Checklist and also includes an analysis of the impact of their use within organisations in the field of education and guidance.

The Model and Checklist developed within the Guiding Cities project can be used to reflect upon the performance level and the quality of guidance services, to design and promote long-term strategies for the improvement of key factors in the organisation like the competencies of guidance practitioners, to support the inclusion of guidance as a strategic priority of the organisation, and to raise the visibility and awareness about the importance or scope of guidance activities, both within the organisation and to external target groups.

The Guiding Cities Model is foreseen to be a tool for organisation reflection together with the Guiding Cities Checklist. These instruments can be used to create an internal and structured space for reflection and discussion about the guidance services offered. There was a need for this reflection among guidance organisations in the GCities, 1 in 3 did not reflect on the quality level of services before the pilot survey and 64.5% did not compare or benchmark with other guidance organisations. The Guiding Cities Model and Checklist offered access to strategic reflection as well as guidance practice examples related to each Model parameter.

Within the organisations that participated in the pilot survey of the Model and Checklist, the tools were seen to have a utility for strategic reflection of 8.6 on a scale from 0 to 10. In order to ensure the highest impact possible of this activity, it is recommended to bring together representatives from different departments or different professional profiles to participate in the activity. This diversity fosters more profound reflection by allowing individual professionals to carry out a reflection and then discussing different results, opinions and perspectives. The contrast of different perspectives is seen as beneficial for having a complete, less biased view of the situation of the organisation and promotes the development of action plans for improvement.

The Guiding Cities tools do not require the guidance stakeholders to only reflect, but also to take strategic action in order to improve or re-establish priorities and guidance services. Through the Checklist, stakeholders can identify parameters of strength within the Guiding Cities Model as well as areas that need improvement. Bringing together different departments or profiles within these strategic activities allows for common work to carry out effective action.

The organisations that participated in the pilot survey are taking different actions after completing the review of the Guiding Cities Model and the reflection of the Checklist. The organisations are reviewing the types of services they offer as well

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as the methodologies used. They are also developing new or increased visibility campaigns to increase the awareness and accessibility of their guidance services in order to better serve their target groups, especially those at risk of Early School Leaving. The use of the Guiding Cities Model and Checklist also inspired organisations to develop evaluation procedures and tools as well as to establish permanent structures for coordination among different departments or guidance actors within the same local context in order to promote collaboration, resource sharing and the creation of common tools of practice.

The value and impact of the Guiding Cities tools overall was given a 8.3 on a scale of 0 to 10, but its long-term value can be seen in the fact that 100% of participants in the pilot survey feel that their organisation should complete the Guiding Cities Checklist or similar strategic reflection tool at least once a year, with 25.7% stating that they would recommend and benefit from the activity once every six months.

The pilot survey confirmed the usefulness of the Guiding Cities tools and most importantly, reaffirmed the benefit of bring together different stakeholders in the field in order to improve guidance services and reduce complex social problems like Early School Leaving.