

GUIDANCE MATTERS



Winter 2021 / Issue 7



INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE:

- National Forum on Guidance November 2021 – Summary Report
- The Irish European Schools Guidance Service
- De-Mystifying Careers in the Public Sector
- Languages and Guidance
- Early Career Related Learning
- Positive Psychology; supporting ADHD learners
- Research on Whole School Guidance in Post-Primary schools



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

And lots more inside



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INTRODUCTION AND NEWS



Welcome... to Guidance Matters, Winter edition 2021.

In this edition, we highlight how different types of guidance services continue to support young people and adults to access and continue with education and training, cope with transitions and aim to progress and prosper in an ever-changing world. Notably, this is our fourth publication where we continue to reflect on the impact of the global Covid-19 pandemic on our families, communities, careers and economies.

In this edition we are delighted to spotlight so many wonderful initiatives in schools which provide careers information and resources to support whole school guidance practice which enable students to develop their own well-informed careers, education and life choices.

Within the FET sector, it is becoming increasingly evident that a focus on national guidance policy and guidelines to inform practice across the FET and lifelong guidance sectors are necessary. The publication in November of the [EU Council Resolution on a new European agenda for adult learning 2021-2030](#) clearly states that Adult Learning ... "should be encouraged and supported through effective lifelong guidance systems with outreach activities..." thus further embedding the requirement to ensure quality guidance services are available to adults across Ireland and augmenting the call for national guidance policies to inform the necessary developments across the FET and HE guidance sectors.



Throughout 2021 NCGE has continued the conversation on the significant role of guidance for sustainability and green guidance, supported in November by Minister Eamonn Ryan providing the keynote address for the National Forum on Guidance. Following on from his attendance at the global COP26, it was heartening to see how the green agenda resonates with the guidance communities in Ireland, with participants agreeing to the need for national guidelines to support the development of Green Guidance practice. It has been an honour for NCGE to be invited to share our explorations on this topic with our colleagues in [Euroguidance Austria and Europe](#) and with the [Career Industry Council of Australia](#) and we hope to continue this conversation in the coming year.



Within Guidance Matters we tend not to feature the personal stories of guidance practitioners. On this occasion, we recognised that such an exception is vital, when a professionally qualified and practicing guidance counsellor speaks to her own career journey and experiences as someone diagnosed with ADHD.

Finally, as we face another Covid impacted Christmas across Ireland, with limited opportunities for people to gather with colleagues to reflect on what has been achieved in 2021, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the genuine commitment of the staff and management of NCGE to their role to inform policy and support quality guidance practice in Ireland. It remains my honour to work with such a dedicated and professional team.

Wishing all our readers, a very peaceful Christmas and a happy and healthy 2022

Is mise le meas,
Jennifer McKenzie
Director



NEWS



Autumn 2021 - NCGE Post Primary Webinar Series

The fantastic support of Eimear McDonnell as Temporary Guidance Officer over the last year allowed NCGE to continue the Post Primary Webinar series in Autumn 2021, as two sessions took place in September and October. The first Webinar on 21st September focused on 'Settling Back in and Self Care for the Guidance Counsellor', as Eimear welcomed Guidance Counsellors back after the beginning of the 2021/2022 academic year. Eimear provided insights from her doctoral research, which looked at post-primary Guidance Counsellor resilience in challenging contexts. As part of the information provided during this session, Leah Moore from Spectrum.Life discussed the Employee Assistance Service (EAS) available to ALL school staff and their family members, known as 'Wellbeing Together: Folláine le Chéile'.

The second Webinar on 19th October provided the sharing of information by relevant stakeholders on current and developing supports for students with intellectual disabilities. This included valuable info from Michelle English, Special Educational Needs Organiser, NCSE, Elaine Morris and Val Real, Limerick Clare branch of the National Learning Network (NLN) and Dr Geraldine Scanlon, Assistant Professor in Psychology and Education DCU. Further Post Primary webinars for 2022 were recently announced.

Click [HERE](#) to find recordings and resources from these and many other Post Primary Webinars.



Autumn 2021 - NCGE FET Webinar Series

NCGE were pleased to deliver Webinar sessions for Further Education and Training in November 2021. These Webinars were developed to inform delivery of Guidance Counselling and Guidance and Information services to "all in an ETB Areas", as per the SOLAS "Future of FET" Strategy 2020-2024. The first webinar, on November 23rd with Roisin Doherty (SOLAS), enabled a range of FET Guidance providers to consider the implications of the Government of Ireland's Adult Literacy for Life Strategy in the wide

variety of FET Guidance settings. On November 30th in collaborating with AHEAD, Dr Tom Tobin facilitated the second webinar, which reflected on how the core principles of Universal Design could inform the delivery of Guidance and Information services. We look forward to making further Webinars for FET Guidance providers available soon.

Click [HERE](#) to find recordings and resources from these FET Webinars.



GREEN GUIDANCE

SUMMARY REPORT – NATIONAL FORUM ON GUIDANCE 2021

Career Guidance for the Green Economy



Fóram Náisiúnta um Threoir
National Forum on Guidance



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Lárionad Náisiúnta um Threoir san Oideachas
National Centre for Guidance in Education

In its 10th year, the NCGE National Forum on Guidance provides a communication and cooperation facility for those involved nationally and internationally in the provision of guidance and the development and support of guidance practitioners and services. Participants include organisations and individuals providing and supporting guidance delivery in both the education and the public employment sectors. Each Forum is intended to inspire participants in their practice or in their work developing guidance related policies and provide a greater comprehension of the overarching societal function guidance performs.

The NCGE National Forum on Guidance of 24th November 2021 concluded a series of Fora discussions on the role of Guidance for Sustainability.

Nearly two hundred stakeholders were in attendance, representing a broad spectrum of guidance provision in Ireland; including Further Education and Training; Post-Primary; Higher Education; the Department of Education; the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science; State and independent agencies; various representative organisations and private practice. We were again additionally pleased to have participation from international stakeholders including Euroguidance Network members and individuals who have and continue to be influential in the development of guidance policy and practice worldwide.



Speakers

Introductions and context were provided by NCGE Director, Jennifer McKenzie and NCGE Management of Guidance Committee Chair, Paul King. Following these:

Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan TD, addressed the Forum on the topic of 'Career Opportunities in the Green and Zero Carbon Economy.'

In his address the Minister outlined the substantial number and diverse nature of new career opportunities this significantly expanding sector affords. Ensuring more learners, parents and jobseekers are aware of the great benefits of these career paths will facilitate their uptake. These Green careers will also improve our economy and contribute to Climate Action Plan goals by helping to address the projected skills deficit to deliver on targets in this sector.

Minister Ryan followed his Forum engagement with a message for the entire Guidance Community that we are pleased to share [HERE](#)

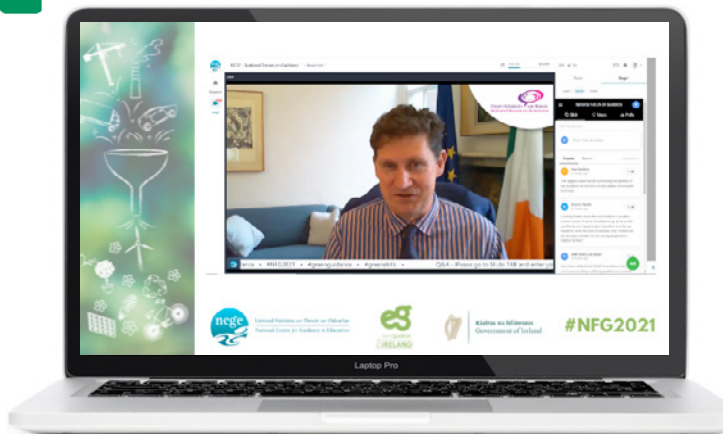
Tony Dalton, Director, Further Education and Training Services, Laois/Offaly ETB and Catherine Gavigan, Guidance Coordinator Co Offaly Adult Guidance Service, outlined their current work in relation to the "Green Economy"

Here, they highlighted the role of guidance in supporting learners and individuals to consider courses and jobs in this sector.



PARTICIPANT COMMENTARY

Perhaps there could be Green posts of responsibility in schools?"



PARTICIPANT COMMENTARY

It is very assuring to see that we are working in the same direction across Europe, facing the same challenges, we can learn a lot from Ireland'

PARTICIPANT COMMENTARY

More education in this whole area for students and more eliciting and more importantly activating student voice is needed

Eamon Ryan Retweeted
National Centre for Guidance in Education
@NCGEGuidance

"A moment of change and revolution" Minister @EamonRyan highlighted the 'scale of change' required across all areas and recognition of relevance of an integrated **Guidance Strategy** reflective of motivating and encompassing this change

Department of Further and Higher Education
11:19 AM - Nov 24, 2021 - Twitter Web App

2 Retweets 3 Quote Tweets 30 Likes

Eamon Ryan
@EamonRyan

The opportunity for careers in #ClimateAction, in #Retrofit, #RenewableEnergy, #CircularEconomy and #SustainableTransport, is colossal

20,000 additional workers needed by 2025

@EGFSN report identifies skills demand across the country to meet targets

gov.ie/en/press-relea...

12:00 PM - Nov 26, 2021 - Twitter Web App

18 Retweets 45 Likes



Discussions and feedback

Accompanying discussions led by Jennifer McKenzie and Paul King, focused on the initial development of NCGE good practice guidelines for “Green Guidance”. The overarching aim being the incorporation of such guidelines into any future National Guidance Strategy; ensuring that sustainable and green guidance principals underpin the future development and delivery of national guidance practice.

A crucial component of every Forum is the opportunity for participants to provide feedback on the topics raised. As with the previous events, this opportunity was facilitated online. Participants were invited to direct comments or questions to Minister Ryan, to engage with Laois/ Offaly ETB and to address the questions of:

- What does Green Guidance look like for you in your context / practice now?
- What do YOU – as practitioners / stakeholders need, to help you to bring a more “Green Guidance” approach to your practice?
- Would guidelines for Green Guidance in Ireland be useful for you?

Around this entire article you can see quotes and feedback from just some of the participants.

All feedback received through the technology on the day is available [HERE](#)



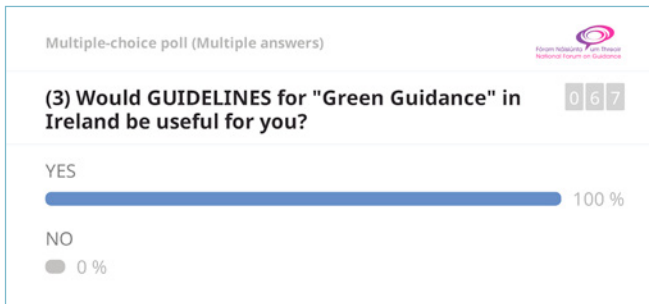
PARTICIPANT COMMENTARY

Schools are a primary influence on young people in terms of the green agenda. Any investment in guidance will facilitate the change of emphasis towards choosing careers that will be necessary to keep our economy developing



Conclusion

Those of us who participated in the three Forum meetings in 2020 and 2021 have begun the conversation in Ireland on the role of lifelong guidance in sustainability and introducing the concepts of Green Guidance. The outcome of the November Forum poll highlights those practitioners and stakeholder alike would welcome clarity, policy and guidelines to inform Green Guidance in Ireland.



NCGE is engaging with this “paradigm shift” as suggested by Professor Peter Plant in the next article and we look forward to communications and conversations with our national, European and international colleagues to further these developments.



PARTICIPANT COMMENTARY

Please can we have a recording of Minister Ryan's speech about this 'revolution' in careers to use in our Guidance Classes. It will help promote his message

PARTICIPANT COMMENTARY

We need to embed sustainability in future Guidance policy and strategy

On behalf of NCGE, thank you to all participants for bringing their expertise and experience and engaging in constructive and open exchanges through the technology provided. NCGE would also like to express appreciation to Streamtech Ltd, the online service provider, for their professionalism and support. We look forward to continued engagement with both the Department of Education and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science in the progression and development of lifelong guidance policy and practice on behalf of all stakeholders.

For more information, including the programme, presentations, participant feedback and video recordings of the Forum go the NCGE National Forum on Guidance home page.

<https://www.ncge.ie/national-forum-guidance>



The below complimentary reading may also be of interest.

Expert Group on Future Skills Needs - 'Skills for Zero Carbon' (Report)

Forum Report (April 2021) (NCGE Guidance Matters Article)

Forum Report (October 2020) (NCGE Guidance Matters Article)

'Green Guidance for Sustainability' (NCGE Guidance Matters Article)

Green Guidance Counselling; 'Working with Nature in Mind' (NCGE Guidance Matters Article)

Career Guidance for Social Justice (Green Theme) (Website)

Education for Sustainable Development (Irish Department of Education)



PARTICIPANT COMMENTARY

We need more resources, examples of practical application from green practitioners

PARTICIPANT COMMENTARY

We need to listen to our clients 'green voice' and meeting it with knowledge, skills and enthusiasm. Also, making use of all the great wellbeing effects that nature has to offer our clients.

GREEN GUIDANCE

Utopia revisited: Green Guidance



Currently, our societies need new visions of a just and sustainable future for all. Green Guidance is a contribution towards this. In this second Guidance Matters article from Professor Peter Plant, he outlines a utopian vision for 'Green Guidance' and its link to social justice.

Utopians have visions for a better society, often with a view to social justice and equality. Some utopians have focused, more specifically, on career development and career guidance. Such visionaries include Charles Fourier, Richard Owen, and Frank Parsons. They are worth revisiting. Currently, our societies need new visions of a just and sustainable future for all. Green Guidance is a contribution towards this, utopian as it may seem.

Key words:



Introduction

Utopian visions play an important underlying role in career guidance and career development. Utopias are never fully unfolded, but they set out a direction, a vision, often articulated by a small, dedicated group of people. One well-known utopian with a view to career development was Frank Parsons, but there are many others, as demonstrated below, each with their particular contribution.

The flip side of the Utopia is Dystopia. The fine line between the two has been demonstrated, repeatedly, in fictional literature and films: Orwell's 1984, Huxley's *Brave new World*, Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, and *The Truman Show*, just to mention of few from modern times. This

contribution will not venture further into this maze: there are plenty of dystopias, in reality, as well as in fiction.

Earlier, on a more positive note, in his famous book *Utopia*, Thomas More (1516) suggested that every citizen must learn farming, and at least one of the other essential trades: weaving, carpentry, metalwork, and masonry. Unemployment is eradicated: all able-bodied citizens must work. Working hours are six hours a day; many willingly work for longer. And lifelong learning is pivotal as all citizens are encouraged to take part in learning in their leisure time. This is More's vision of career development, aligned with his focus on social justice. 500 years later *Utopia for realists* by Bregman (2017), calls for a re-orientation in terms of work

and wages, (re)introducing the concept of a basic citizens' income, as does Guy Standing (2011) with a special view to the Precariat. In my home country, Denmark, similar visions of a just and balanced society including a basic citizens' income, were forwarded by Meyer, Helweg & Sørensen (1981), proclaiming the Revolt from the Center, thus venturing into career development in their analysis that decent work, education, and training would hugely benefit from a basic citizens' income.

Parsons and other pioneers

Such visionaries have often indirectly dealt with career development, or directly, as did Frank Parsons (1909). His visions reached far beyond career guidance/counselling itself. Based on 'Christianity and brotherly love', his societal vision was *Mutualism* (Parsons, 1894): he advocated for a balanced, just, and peaceful society. In the career development field, he is best known for his three-step matching approach to career guidance. This method resonated with the growing interest in scientific approaches to psychology during this period, including psychometrics. Parsons has been viewed as the father of career guidance and counselling, but other reformers had dealt with this question, earlier. We will return to this point, below.

Back in Boston, the Civic Service House was opened in 1901, during a period of massive immigration. The North End of Boston, formerly crammed with Irish refugees of the mid-century potato famine, became the refuge of Eastern Europeans in the 1870s and Italians in the 1880s: immigrants made up more than 75% of Boston's population. They lived in grimy tenement houses: whole families in a single room without sanitary facilities, working 10-12 hours a day, 6 days a week, in sweatshop factories, and in dangerous building trades, as noted by Zytowski (2001). Parsons and others in the Progressive Movement saw this as a waste of resources and as a societal plight. With this backdrop, a workers' institute was established, i.e., a continuing education center: the 'Breadwinner's Institute', renamed the 'Vocational Bureau of the Civic Service House' in 1908. It was privately funded, and its purpose was 'to aid young people in choosing an occupation, preparing themselves for it, finding an opening in the chosen field, and building up a career of efficiency and success.' Parsons worked at the Bureau less than a year, and wrote *Choosing a Vocation* (Parsons, 1909), published after his death. Several scholars have dealt with Parsons' life and influence on career guidance, including Mann (1950), Davis (1969), Gummere (1988), Jones (1994), Zytowski (2001), and Pope & Sveinsdottir (2005), some of whom viewed Parsons as a 'prophet', or as a 'crusader', no less.

Vocophers

Parsons, however, was not the first to advance a notion of career guidance/vocational counselling. One of his predecessors was Lysander Richards, who published *Vocophy, The New Profession* (Richards, 1881): vocophers, i.e., vocational counsellors, career development facilitators, were to be the new profession. Aligned with this, Parsons sketched a training program for counsellors to be taken up by the Boston YMCA alongside planning the Bureau. Its purpose was "to fit young men to become vocational counselors and manage vocation bureaus in connection with YMCAs, schools, colleges and universities, and public systems, associations and businesses." Parsons died before these plans could be implemented. However, by 1909, teachers from each of Boston's 117 elementary and vocational schools were trained in vocational counseling. Topics included principles and methods of guidance, and occupational information. Several local progressive groups developed plans for placement services which, hopefully, would have a positive impact on juvenile delinquency. In short, Parsons was part of a broad progressive movement, as noted by Zytowski (2001). According to Herschenson (2006), many other people played an important role in the realization of the vision for better career guidance: Pauline Agassiz Shaw (financial support), Meyer Bloomfield (provided the venue for and subsequent direction of the Vocation Bureau), and Ralph Albertson (preparation of Parsons' s manuscript for posthumous publication).

Moreover, generations before the US-based Progressive Movement, both Robert Owen (1771-1858, Wales/Scotland), and Charles Fourier (1772-1837, France) had formulated societal utopian visions which included elements of career development. They were labelled, rather dismissingly, *Utopian Socialists* by their opponents, one of which, incidentally, was Karl Marx. Many other spiritual and social leaders could deserve mentioning. Below, however, with relation to career development in particular, we will limit ourselves to explore some of the visions of Owen and Fourier.

Robert Owen

Robert Owen, manufacturer and societal reformer, is viewed as one of the most influential early 19th-century advocates of utopian socialism. One of his main points was the importance of educating the workers as an integral part of the social and industrial welfare programs in New Lanark Mills in Lanarkshire, Scotland. This was one of several such demonstration projects, which all had built-in elements of career development. Thus, Owen's vision was for "New Moral World" of happiness, enlightenment,

and prosperity through education, science, technology, communal living, and decent work. Owen envisioned that his utopian community would create a "superior social, intellectual and physical environment" based on his ideals of social reform (Owen, 1813). Owen also sponsored other experimental utopian communities, including New Harmony, Indiana, USA. Robert Owen's son Robert Dale Owen (1801-1877), joined by other siblings of Robert Owen, managed the day-to-day operation of this settlement, and he published widely on these matters, co-editing the *New-Harmony Gazette* along with Frances Wright (1795-1852), one of the few female activists in this field. Emancipation and social justice were pivotal concepts in these endeavors: career development, enlightenment, decent jobs, and healthy living conditions were seen as complementary aspects of emancipation and of social justice, for both men and women.

The New Harmony utopian community dissolved in 1827, but a string of Owenite communities in the United States emerged during the second half of the 1820s: between 1825 and 1830 more than a dozen such colonies were established in the United States, inspired by the ideas of Robert Owen. This movement antedated similar initiatives, inspired by Charles Fourier.

Charles Fourier

Fourier saw work as passion (Fourier, 1848). This was radical idea in the early days of industrialization, in particular for workers. In his ideal world, jobs were vocations, and thus based on the interests and desires of the individual. There were incentives: unpleasant jobs would receive higher salaries, but, overall, mutual concern and cooperation were the pillars of societal success. He was obsessed with numbers: he believed that there were twelve common passions which resulted in 810 types of character, so the ideal phalanx would be a group of 1620 people, supplementing each other's talents and passions. He even designed such *Phalansteres*, i.e., buildings which would be the concrete framework for a just distribution of

products according to need; for assignment of functions according to individual faculties and inclinations; for constant change of functions and tasks, and for short working hours. Long working hours would take the passion out of work, as we well know. Career development was built into the variations of tasks, driven by passion, and thus a pivotal factor in terms of emancipation and of social justice, for both men and women. Fourier, incidentally, is credited for coining the idiom *feminism*.

Interestingly, and focusing again on the USA, Fourier's social views inspired a whole movement of intentional communities, as did Owen. One, in Ohio, was in fact called Utopia; they were to be found all over the USA. Indeed, modern times' Intentional Communities, of which there are thousands all over the world, may be seen as a further development of Fourier's inspiration. Some of his ideas have thus become mainstream; others failed, for instance his vision that one day there would be six million Phalansteres loosely ruled by a world Omniarch or a World Congress of Phalanxes (Beecher, 1986).

Fall and rise

Did they fail, as Utopias tend to do? In some sense, the short answer is yes: the Owenites and most Fourier-inspired initiatives faded away after a few years of existence. Parsons' vision of Mutualism was never realised. But before they are dismissed as irrelevant shadows from the past, let us revisit some of their visions: emancipation, decent work, varied tasks, healthy living conditions, general education, free health services, gender equality, social justice. Such issues resonate with declarations of human rights, with goals of trade unions, with welfare policies, and with career guidance (IAEVG, 2017). Once they were viewed as extreme and radical: now, particularly in welfare states, these ideas are mainstream. They did not come about by the efforts of singular (wo)men: they are the result of combined struggles. We all stand on the shoulders of others, and we are nowhere the End of History (Fukuyama, 1989): new Utopias are under way, green ones.



Thomas More (1477-1535) told of a 'utopia', i.e., a perfect imaginary world, drawing upon the Greek ou-topos meaning 'no place' or 'nowhere'. It was a pun: the almost identical Greek word eu-topos means 'a good place'. Thus, utopian ideas have nowhere to go, or, on the contrary, they can find a place everywhere. This, too, is the case of new, perhaps not any longer so vastly utopian, visions of Green Guidance, i.e., sustainable career development. The author of these lines has been an advocate for such ideas over the last 25 years. Initially, Green Guidance and its emphasis on the environmental/sustainability impact of career choices was seen as radical, somewhat far-fetched, and, in short, utopian. Since then, gradually, sustainability has been accepted as an important and virtually mainstream concept, to a degree where, for example, Irish education across sectors cover sustainability as a pivotal component, including career education (NCGE (2021), and the United Nations have adopted the, by now, well-known 17 Goals of Sustainable Development (UN, 2015). These two examples, as part of programmes in many countries on ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) as promoted by Unesco (2018), point to the important links between social justice and sustainable career development. In this context, Green Guidance has moved from a marginal and extreme position to being a vital and, increasingly, mainstream component in developing the concept of future sustainable career development. This vision has been promoted by a number of scholars, notably Barham & Hall (1996); Di Fabio & Bucci (2016); Dimsits (2019); O'Donohoe (2020); Maggi (2019); NCGE (2009); NCGE (2021); Packer (2019); Plant (1996; 1999; 2003; 2007a; 2007b; 2008; 2014a; 2014b; 2015; 2020a; 2020b); Pouyaud & Guichard (2018); and Roe (2020).

On a more analytical note, introducing four aspects in terms of sustainable career development and career guidance, Packer (2019) has developed a 4-field analysis model to distinguish between Light Green and Dark Green

approaches, based on Watts (1996), thus differentiating between Radical, Progressive, Conservative, and Liberal approaches, and their respective practical consequences in terms of green guidance practices. In doing so, Packer (2019) helps to distinguish between 'light green' measures within the present society, versus a deeper, 'dark green' approach to rearrange societal structures. In these terms, Dobson (2007) makes a distinction between *environmentalism* and *ecologism*. Environmentalism 'argues for a managerial approach to environmental problems, secure in the belief that they can be solved without fundamental changes in present values or patterns of production and consumption' (ibid, p 2). Environmental approaches, in this view, would be seen as socio-politically conservative or liberal. Ecologism on the other hand, 'holds that a sustainable and fulfilling existence presupposes radical changes in our relationship with the non-human natural world, and in our mode of social and political life' (ibid, p 3). Thus, ecologism is politically radical in nature. With this backdrop, the question remains whether Green Guidance should go Dark Green or Light Green? Thunberg (2019) would not be in doubt: radical approaches are required.

In a broader educational perspective, several scholars and organisations have dealt with environmental education (e.g., UNESCO, 2018), or from a sociological perspective in terms of developing Citizen Green (e.g. Mason, 2013). This points to the need for developing Green Career Education, as noted in examples from Canada, where climate changes and career education programs take their departure from the voices of children. On this basis Maggi (2019, p. 3) concludes that:

'Students would learn about the careers of their own interest, the role that such work would play in the bigger picture of planetary health, and they would be counselled to reflect on how their professional choices could make this planet healthier.'



Conclusions & perspectives: green guidance and social justice

There is a growing awareness of the clash between senseless economic growth, and environmental/sustainability concerns (Plant, 2020a). Whereas economic growth in the narrow sense used to be the solution within a capitalistic mindset, it now creates as many problems. Jobless growth, a deterioration of the natural resources, and the undermining of workers' rights and wages: these are some of the present predicaments. Globalisation in terms of global trade with its long-distance transport to/from low-wage areas adds to the problem, as does mindless tourism, and industrialised farming and fishing, just to mention a few. In this situation, guidance must become part of the solution, rather than the problem. Social justice and career guidance are interdependent, and, though obviously embedded in social structures, even more profoundly linked to sustainability issues.

In these terms, an important link between social justice and Green Guidance is established. This aligns with Irving & Malik (2005) who argue that career choices,

individual as they may be, have implications beyond the individual, as they are linked to wider societal issues. Similarly, Hooley, Sultana & Thomsen (2018; 2019) take the social justice discourse further in terms of criticising neo-liberalism: without increased sustainability these will be no social justice. Green Guidance, environmental issues, climate changes, and social justice are critically interlinked. Ecojustice has been introduced to the career guidance field by Irving & Malik-Liévano (2019) to capture the links and tensions between environmental concerns and social justice issues.

Green Guidance moves career-decisions centre stage, to a higher note of personal commitment, societal involvement, and meaningfulness. In relation to globalisation, and to social justice, it places guidance in a central global position: environmental issues and sustainability concerns know no boundaries (Hulot, 2006; Monbiot, 2006; Stern, 2006). This is why it is so urgent that guidance workers and scholars make their contribution towards green changes, green career development, and a sustainable future: Green Guidance. Now, how utopian is that.

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For all references click [HERE](#).



About the Author:

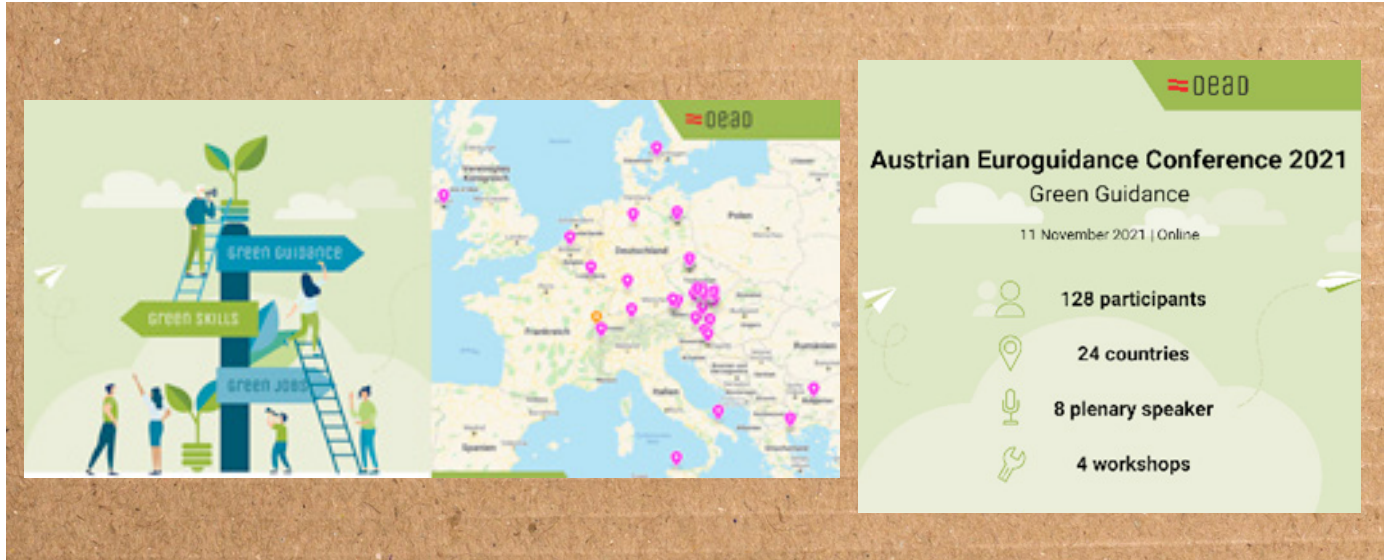
Professor, Dr. Peter Plant has worked in the field of career education and counselling since 1974 in schools, higher education institutions, and in the employment service in Denmark. He has worked as a researcher in many European projects on guidance, as a consultant to the EU-Commission, and to the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN), and in various guidance related capacities in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Latvia, Estonia, Slovenia, Slovakia, The Czech Republic, Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Cyprus, Canada, Australia, the USA, and Kyrgyzstan, in a number of cases as a Visiting Professor. His latest assignment was his professorship at the University of South-East Norway. He and his wife run an ecological farm, a local farmers' market, and a small book town, recycling second-hand books. He is active in rural policies, the chairperson of the local village council, and the chairperson of a regional EU rural fund in his home country, Denmark.

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GREEN GUIDANCE

A lookback to the Austrian Euroguidance Conference 2021



In this article, Eva Baloch-Kaloianov of Euroguidance Austria, provides a short summary of their recently hosted national guidance conference on the theme of “Green Guidance”. This article echoes the content of recent Irish National Fora on Guidance and the associated developing focus on Guidance for sustainability.

It is a coincidence, but also very telling, that the Austrian Euroguidance conference 2021 took place at the same time as the crucial final phase of the Glasgow Climate Summit. Answers regarding the existential threats of climate change are increasingly being sought by people when they are taking decisions about education and career paths. The conference focused on the question of what impulses Career Guidance can provide in shaping a greener and more ecological future for all. The event was linked to the objectives of the new Erasmus+ 2021-2027 programme, the European Green Deal and the European Skills Agenda.

The topic of “Green Guidance”, which key note speaker, **Professor Dr Peter Plant**, developed 20 years ago, has found its way increasingly into the discourses and practices of career guidance during the last couple of years. In his own words...

“Green Guidance” gives a broader perspective to career choices by asking the simple question:

“What are the implications of my career choice in terms of sustainability?”

Peter Plant, who describes himself as a “lifelong utopian”, diagnosed a change in basic assumptions in the role of guidance.

“Green Guidance moves career-decisions centre stage, to a higher note of personal commitment, societal involvement, and meaningfulness. In relation to globalisation, and to social justice, it places guidance in a central global position: environmental issues and sustainability concerns know no boundaries.”

He highlighted the important link between social justice and Green Guidance, both profoundly linked to sustainability issues.

Jennifer McKenzie, Director at the Irish National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE), outlined in her speech how the Irish National Forum on Guidance introduced the idea of lifelong guidance in promoting sustainable development and change and initiated a wider discussion based on contributions by **Professor Mary McMahon** in October 2020 and **Peter Plant** in April 2021.



Three representatives from Austria, **Wolfgang Bliem**, ibw Austria – Research & Development in VET, **Margit Helene Meister**, Department of Environmental and Energy Management of the Province of Lower Austria and **Rosemarie Pichler**, Educational Guidance Lower Austria, then jointly presented the recent regional initiative 'Green Jobs for you'....

"Raising awareness among young people and young adults about green jobs, motivating them and providing them with comprehensive information is the focus of this year's activities in Lower Austria", said Rosemarie.

A special focus was set in developing "Green Guidance" especially for people in reorientation phases. The subsequent workshop held in the afternoon session of the conference gave room for further exchange on the regional approaches taken.

Anthony Mann, OECD, provided insights into three recent OECD studies which all addressed the question of green jobs, young people's interest in understanding and access to green jobs. While eight out of ten students across the OECD agree or strongly agree that 'looking after the global environment is important to me personally', there is also concerns.

"Across countries, young people who care deeply about climate change often feel that they are unable to make a difference",

stated Anthony who then elaborated further on what studies suggested to be most effective in terms of career guidance.

To deepen the exchange on the topic, four parallel workshops were provided in the afternoon session of the conference, with experts from Austria, Czech Republic, Iceland, Ireland and Switzerland.



The OeAD, Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation / Euroguidance Austria thanks all participants and speakers from more than twenty-four countries who contributed to the success of the conference.

Presentations and video recordings of the conference are available [HERE](#)



About the Author:

Eva Baloch-Kaloianov works for Euroguidance Austria within the Austrian agency for Education and Internationalisation (OeAD).

GENERAL

Irish European Schools Guidance Service 2021



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Lárionad Náisiúnta um Threoir san Oideachas
National Centre for Guidance in Education

The European Schools and the Accredited European Schools are educational institutions set up in the European Union's Member States. They provide children with a multilingual and multicultural education at nursery, primary and secondary levels. The schools follow a specific curriculum and offer the European Baccalaureate diploma. The Irish Department of Education (DoE) provides funding for access to appropriate guidance for the children of Irish parents who are enrolled in the 13 European Schools. This service is geared specifically to the needs of Irish students who may be considering applying to Irish third-level institutions and who have questions regarding general entry requirements, course requirements and application procedures and deadlines. It is coordinated by NCGE / Euroguidance Ireland and is delivered by qualified Guidance Counsellors on behalf of NCGE in the Autumn of each year. In 2021 approximately 100 students availed of the service.

Background to delivery

In September 2021, the Irish Inspector for European Schools (secondary) contacted the 'Director' of each European School requesting the completion of a short online information form.

The data gathered indicating the number of eligible students in each school.

Following receipt of information pertaining to eligible numbers, NCGE communicated directly with a designated 'Contact Teacher'. We outlined the necessary steps that students would need to take to schedule a meeting with an Irish Guidance Counsellor and provided additional information relating to the coordination of delivery. A follow up (online) meeting then took place with NCGE, addressing any additional queries.

The 'Contact Teacher' in each school is critical to ensure the smooth delivery of this very valuable service. This is done primarily by them ensuring the timely dissemination of information to all eligible students (and where feasible and appropriate parents).

In parallel, NCGE contracted three Irish Guidance Counsellors to deliver the service. Two of these Guidance Counsellors had prior experience of delivery and one was new to the service. In advance of delivery, each Guidance Counsellor was required to prepare background information on education opportunities in Ireland, make use of various NCGE resources and presentations provided and review and have a clear understanding of the European Baccalaureate syllabus and format.

“ I would like to put a good word in for the last guidance councillor who spoke to me in my final year. Not only was she informative and professional during our 1 on 1 online consultation, but she encouraged me to pursue my chosen studies (sports science) in which I find more and more pleasure studying, with each passing day. I think I'm off to a rather good start. Thank you! ”

(2020 - Student)

Delivery

To support Guidance Counsellor delivery and record keeping and to ensure that all student records are stored appropriately within GDPR compliance, in 2020 NCGE developed a confidential online appointment booking and record keeping portal. This portal was once again used in 2021. For students who engaged with remote provision in 2020 and again in 2021 this platform was an invaluable tool for both them and Guidance Counsellors, allowing for the monitoring of students' educational progression and developing career aspirations. Along with selecting their desired appointment date and time, student information gathered through this portal included:

- Subjects currently studied
- Current interests in terms of courses and careers
- Whether they are studying Irish or not
- Any SEN they might have
- Queries they have for a guidance counsellor that could be addressed in their session.
- Whether a parent (if in S7) intended to attend briefly at the end of the session.

All consultations were facilitated remotely and joined via Zoom on the day and time selected by students. To ensure delivery would not be interrupted by any potential school closures and to facilitate any parental attendance, the service took place outside of school hours over the months of November & December, Monday – Thursday evenings, between 6pm & 9pm Irish time.

S6 and S7 students were offered individual consultations. S3, S4 and S5 students were offered Group consultations. An individual consultation took approximately 40 minutes. S3, S4 and S5 students took 1hr in small groups of 6/7.

“S7” is the final year for European Schools, with students making decisions and choices for further and higher education options. “S6” is similar to 5th year in Ireland; “S5” is similar to the TY/4th Year age group and “S4/S3” similar to 3rd year age group in Ireland.

A substantial number of [Resources](#) and an [FAQ section](#) were further developed to enable students and their parents prepare for their scheduled guidance sessions and continue their research regarding the Irish education system and how it relates to the European Baccalaureate.

“Very good service. Thank you so much. My son started his first classes online at Trinity today”
(2020 - Parent)

European Schools - 2021 graduates

Despite the challenges presented by COVID-19, a number of European school students made the journey from mainland Europe to pursue their third-level education in Ireland. Starting their college journey in a variety of subject areas from Arts to Psychology, Pharmacy and Environmental Science. We wish them the very best of luck with their continued education and future careers. *You can find some additional feedback from them in the quotes surrounding this article.*

“Due to burn-out following past 18 months of studying during Covid, my daughter decided to take a gap year instead of going straight to University. Euroguidance helped a great deal and she hopes to get a place in an Irish University in September 2022”
(2020 - Parent)

The provision and success of this service is down to the continued support and cooperation of all involved: to the European school Directors and Contact Teachers, our expanding European Guidance team, the Department of Education Inspectorate, and of course, the European School students and their parents. Go raibh míle maith agaibh uile as ucht bhur dtacaíochta!

For more regarding the guidance service provided to the European schools, past reports, and general information provided to students and parents, see: www.euroguidance.ie/european-schools

For more information regarding the European school system and the European Baccalaureate see: www.eurasc.eu/en

Questions relating to the operation of this service may be addressed to the NCGE at euroguidance@ncge.ie

“Currently I am on a gap year, but Euroguidance really helped me decide that Ireland was a good option. The received information will help me for the next application stage to Dublin, Cork and Galway”
(2020 - Student)

“It was very helpful for the students to have guidance in their last few years of secondary. It was highly informative and the sessions clarified a large variety of information for the students, moreover motivating them further to pursuing a good education in Ireland for their future”
(2020 - Parent)

GENERAL

The Place of Spirituality in Wellbeing?



Theoretical frameworks underpinning the delivery of guidance provision are informed by research in areas such as psychology, education, sociology and counselling theory. The provision of Guidance Counselling requires a holistic focus on the needs of the individual or group. In considering the “whole” person, the issue of spirituality is being reconsidered in the context of societal needs, which can inform the development and delivery of Guidance Counselling approaches.

Interest in spirituality is growing at a fast pace, one need venture no further than any good bookshop to find a plethora of books devoted to the subject. In recent years, a holistic approach to understanding individuals has initiated this resurgence in the exploration of spirituality. Indeed, spirituality has become an emerging area of interest because of its pivotal role in wellbeing. Like our physical and mental health, spirituality is a core aspect of wellbeing that should be nurtured. Indeed, as Maslow aptly stated spirituality is “part of the human essence; a defining characteristic of human nature that exists within us all.” Rassool (2006) also further emphasis the central role of spirituality in human nature, as he asserts that

Spirituality is that aspect of human existence that gives it its ‘humanness.’ It concerns the structures of significance that give meaning and direction to a person’s life and helps them deal with the vicissitudes of existence. As such it includes such vital dimensions as the quest for meaning, purpose, self-transcending knowledge, meaningful relationships, love and commitment, as well as [for some] a sense of the Holy amongst us (Rassool 2006, p.211).

Spirituality and Wellbeing

There is growing evidence that links spirituality to wellbeing. Wellbeing can be defined as a way of life oriented toward optimal health in which “the body, mind, and spirit are integrated by the individual to live more fully within the human and natural community” (Myers Sweeney and Wittmer 2000, p. 252).

Wellbeing can be understood as consisting of six major dimensions namely the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical, social and occupational dimensions. Spirituality is therefore a key aspect in one’s overall wellbeing. Myers, Sweeney and Witmer (2000) point to the pivotal role of spirituality in wellbeing. They claim that

Wellbeing is a way of life oriented toward optimal health in which the body, mind and spirit are integrated to enable the individual to live more fully within the human and natural community (Myers, Sweeney and Witmer 2000, p.252).

Furthermore, renowned psychologist Albert Maslow, in his study of optimally functioning people, labelled those at the top of his hierarchy, “transcendent self-actualisers” (Maslow in Chandler et al. 1992). He believed self-actualisers had a more holistic perspective about the world and a natural tendency towards synergy – intrapsychic, interpersonal, intercultural, international, and much more consciously meta motivated behaviour.

Linking Spirituality and Wellbeing to Theory

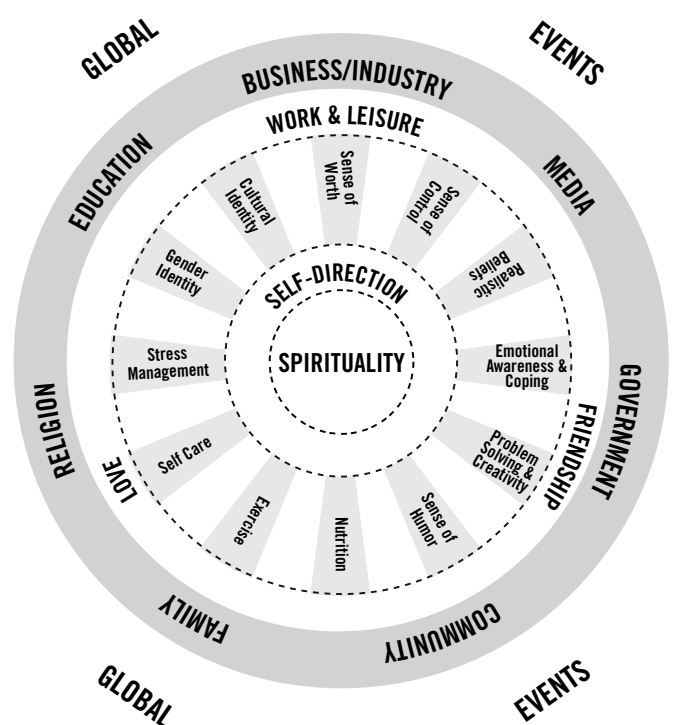
Prominent psychologists and social scientists including William James, Alfred Adler, Carl Jung and Victor Frankl have long agreed that the values and principles that comprise spiritual beliefs belong to humanity and are a central component of human functioning. Several theories of individual psychology (including Adler’s, Jung’s and Maslow’s) highlight personal spiritual pursuits as important tasks within psychological development. This spiritual development is not contingent upon the presence of religious faith; it is an inherent capacity of humankind (Adler 1938/1964; Frankl 1959/2006 and Maslow 1970).

Adler proposed a holistic approach to human development. He suggested that holism (the indivisibility of self) and purposiveness were fundamental to our understanding of human behaviour. He believed that such understanding required an “emphasis on the whole rather than the elements, the interaction between the whole and parts, and the importance of man’s social context” (Adler in Ansbacher and Ansbacher 1967, p. 11-12). Viewing the person as a whole rather than a sum of their parts means that treatment must address the whole person. In this sense Myers et al. (2000) assert wellness should be regarded as much more than being physically and mentally healthy. Instead, it is the full combination of states of physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. This thinking provided a structure for understanding wellness as a higher-order and indivisible factor.

Carl Jung (1961) also claimed that the spiritual instinct was central to the human experience. Furthermore, Jung maintained that client’s illnesses must ultimately be understood as the suffering of a soul that has not yet found its meaning, particularly in the second half of life. Accordingly, Jung (1961) used phrases such as ‘spiritual stagnation’ and ‘psychic sterility’ to describe client suffering.

Recent studies also highlight the relationship between spirituality and mental health, physical health, life satisfaction, and wellness. Ho and Ho (2007) argue that spirituality adds a greater sense of meaning and purpose to life, increases life satisfaction, promotes higher levels of wellbeing and self-esteem, and leads to overall better mental health. It creates a sense of selflessness which can reduce egocentrism and fixation in the mind, which leads to a reduction in feelings of distress. It also serves as a valuable resource to individuals during times of stress, providing a buffer and facilitating greater psychological adjustment (Baumeister 2010).

In the 1990s the fundamental link between spirituality and wellness was explored by Witmer and Sweeney when they introduced and developed the ‘Wheel of Wellness Model’. This counselling model draws on different disciplines in its attempt to measure wellbeing. Spirituality is placed at the centre of this wheel of wellness. Surrounding the centre of the wheel are ‘spokes’ relating to wellness. These include having realistic beliefs; emotional responsiveness and management; intellectual stimulation, problem solving, and creativity; sense of humour; exercise; nutrition; self-care; stress management; gender identity; and cultural identity (Myers and Sweeney 2007). In the wheel of wellness spirituality is regarded as the core and hierarchically most important component of wellness and being spiritually well is considered to have a direct impact on all of the aforementioned spheres of wellness.



Spirituality, Wellbeing and Guidance Counselling

Wellbeing is a central tenet of guidance counselling in schools. The continuing interest in spirituality has created a prevailing demand for guidance counsellors to become more aware of and attuned to the spiritual needs of their students. In 2017 the Institute of Guidance Counsellors highlighted this need. In their directive 'Guidance Counselling: Core Competencies and Professional Practice.' They outlined the necessity for guidance counsellors to have theoretical knowledge of their client's 'spirituality' and a 'holistic model of guidance counselling' that addresses the 'client's whole person and his or her wellbeing' (<https://igc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Guidance-Counselling-Core-Competencies-Professional-Practice-1.pdf>).

While health education has focused primarily on physical wellness, guidance counselling has focused primarily on emotional, social and occupational wellness, little attention has been given to spiritual wellness. Spiritual health is often viewed as intangible or un-teachable, or even as an inappropriate domain for counsellors (Chandler et al. 1992). This may be, at least in part, because spirituality has been considered primarily the domain of religion. In relation to addressing spirituality in a counselling setting Allen and Yarin (1981) stated

The development of the profession should include an expansion of efforts.... An elemental weakness, at this point, is the area of spiritual health. It is unexplored territory that the profession has so far avoided for lack of clear conceptual definition of the construct. This area needs further development and integration (Allen and Yarin 1981, p.5).

Currently there is extensive literature exploring the trend towards greater acceptance of the belief that spirituality has a significant role to play in wellbeing. Hayes (2009) hypothesizes that the revival of interest in spirituality in the late 20th and early 21st centuries is the result of a larger cultural and intellectual trend away from scientific explanations towards a more organic conception of reality. Many noted this change in psychotherapy. Stanard, Sandhu and Painter (2000, p. 6) even identified spirituality as 'an emerging fifth force in counselling and psychotherapy'.

Although there seems to be a resurgence of interest in spirituality, little has advanced in the use of spirituality in guidance counselling. Allen and Yarin (1981) suggested this was an area that needed further development in the 1980s. However, in 2016, over thirty years later, Gerald Corey acknowledged that not much has changed. He echoes the same belief that counselling has been slow to recognise the need to address spiritual concerns. He points out that counsellors ask just about every imaginable question about a client's life yet often do not inquire about the meaning of spiritual values in counselling (Corey 2016, p.63).

Spirituality is part of being human and is something that could be explored in order to help students reach optimal wellbeing. Even though there is a resurgence of interest in spirituality it is still an area that is under explored in the counselling process.



Conclusion

There was a time when spirituality was distinctly separate from the counselling process. Many practitioners were hesitant to broach the topic of their client's religious or spiritual concerns, lest they be seen as inappropriately mixing counselling with spiritual – religious matters, which were viewed as the domain of the clergy, not of the counsellor (Craig and Young 2014). Over the past number of years, spirituality has received increased attention within the area of psychology. There has been a considerable increase in literature published relating to the conceptualisation of spirituality and the psychological correlation between wellbeing and spiritual variables.

Craig and Young (2014) encourage counsellors to integrate spirituality in the counselling process. They assert that spiritual matters are therapeutically relevant, ethically appropriate, and potentially significant topics for the practice of counselling with diverse client populations in a variety of settings (Craig and Young 2014). They believe that client's spiritual and religious values play a major part in human life and these values should be seen as a potential resource in counselling (Craig and Young 2014).



Biography

Claire Considine is a PhD student in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. She specialises in spirituality, wellbeing and human development. Claire is also a Guidance Counsellor in St. Fintan's High School, Sutton, Dublin.

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PRIMARY

What is Early Career Related Learning and Why is it important?



In this Article, Aisling Murray Fleming, DCU, explores the introduction of early career related learning which can inform the career aspirations of young children thus supporting gender equality in education and widening horizons of future careers options.

For many years, career development has been described by theorists as a developmental process. We know this process begins in childhood and is lifelong (Magnuson and Starr, 2000; Porfeli, Hartung and Vondracek, 2008; Auger, Blackhurst and Wahl, 2005; Cinamon and Yeshayahu, 2020). However, to date, with few exceptions, career development research and interventions have, focused on adolescents and young adults. This can be attributed to the history of vocational guidance, which emerged as a result of industrialisation and was focused on matching jobseekers to roles. It was the 1950s before children's perspectives were meaningfully considered by career theorists. Consequently, current knowledge of the nature of career development learning among children is less extensive than that of young adults and adults. Cahill and Furey surmise that although "the literature authenticates childhood as integral to career development, early childhood has been largely overlooked in practice" (2017, p. 15).

Early career-related learning has been defined as a series of activities, which help young people develop the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to make successful choices and manage transitions in learning and work. Career-related learning is not about bringing guidance counselling into primary schools on a formal basis but instead applying a career lens to the existing curricula, allowing children to learn about careers and the world of work through subjects such as history, geography and science.

We know that there is already career related learning happening in many primary schools, both intentionally and unintentionally. Primary school children are developing key career related skills as they engage in a variety of learning and play activities that introduce and develop foundational concepts and skills, such as social and emotional learning, empathy and teamwork. However, international longitudinal research has shown the consequences of a lack of focused early career related learning to include issues such as gender-stereotyping

of professions by children, in particular by girls. These biases have been shown to lead to narrowed aspirations for girls, a position has been further evidenced in research undertaken by the non-profit organisation Education and Employers in the UK (Kashefpakdel, Rehill and Hughes, 2018) and by the “Future at Five” report (OECD, 2020), with both research projects documenting children as young as five years having assigned gender to careers.

Research has also shown that the career aspirations of children is heavily influenced by what they see around them, at home, in school and through media (internet, TV etc). While these can be positive, they can also be

negative with low expectations being cemented simply by a lack of positive influences. This in turn can restrict children’s futures by limiting what they believe they can do, e.g., reducing academic effort or restricting options from an early age and thus limiting options going forward. The challenge for us is to replace the concept of “what do you want to be when you grow up?” with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to navigate the future. Equipping our young people to be able recognise and utilise resources and opportunities (such as guidance) when they are available to them, in a sense future-proofing our children!



About the Author

Aisling Murray Fleming is an Assistant Professor and Chair of the Guidance Counselling programmes in the School of Human Development in Dublin City University’s Institute of Education. She holds an MSc in Guidance Counselling and a BA (Hons) in International Business. Prior to joining DCU, Aisling worked in both business and education, developing and delivering a range of employability and careers education programmes for groups and individuals across the lifespan. Aisling is also a PhD candidate focusing on the area of Early Career Related Learning for primary school children in an Irish context. She can be contacted at: aisling.fleming@dcu.ie



POST-PRIMARY

Reflection on the Autumn Webinar for Post Primary Guidance Counsellors: ‘Working with students with intellectual disabilities’



‘Working with Students with Intellectual Disabilities’ was one of two webinars presented in the Autumn 2021 NCGE Post Primary Webinar Series. This article provides an overview of the webinar and reflects on the similarities between ‘working with students in general’ and working with students with intellectual disabilities.

Article 23 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that individuals ‘with a mental or physical disability have the right to special care, education and training designed to help them to achieve the greatest possible self-reliance and to lead a full active life in society.’ The ‘Working with students with intellectual disabilities’ webinar addressed the rights of these students within the Irish system. This webinar, which was coordinated by NCGE, saw an input from guest speakers from the National Council for Special Education, the National Learning Network and the School of Human Development in DCU.

The discussion and presentation within the webinar overall outlined the contemporary context and landscape in terms of the needs of and supports for students with Intellectual Disabilities. In addition, the importance of ‘supported transitions’ was emphasised as a key element for students. For example, if facilitated well, a supported transition will enable school leavers with intellectual disabilities to access mainstream opportunities in further and higher education, training and employment. Reflecting on this content, the importance of Article 23 in relation to the Rights of the Child cannot be underemphasised. However, in a utopia, the sentiment within this article would be extended to all students, irrespective of their background, ethnicity or the presence or absence of any disability.

Within the discussion, the NCSE provided a model of the vision of support for individuals with intellectual disabilities (see below). This model outlines a continuum of support depending on the needs of ‘all, some and few.’ A continuum of support also a key model within effective planning and practice of Whole School Guidance outlined in the ‘Whole school Guidance Framework’ (NCGE, 2017). In looking at the two models, significant similarities can be seen which makes for interesting reflection. In addition, when the key skills of Junior Cycle (DES, 2015) are also reflected upon, ‘communication skills’ and ‘managing myself’ are also reflected in the NCSE model.

It was also discussed within the webinar, that transitions are highly significant for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The importance of a smooth, supported and coordinated transition is critical for individuals. Again, in a utopian system, every transition would be characterised by a smooth, supported and coordinated transition.

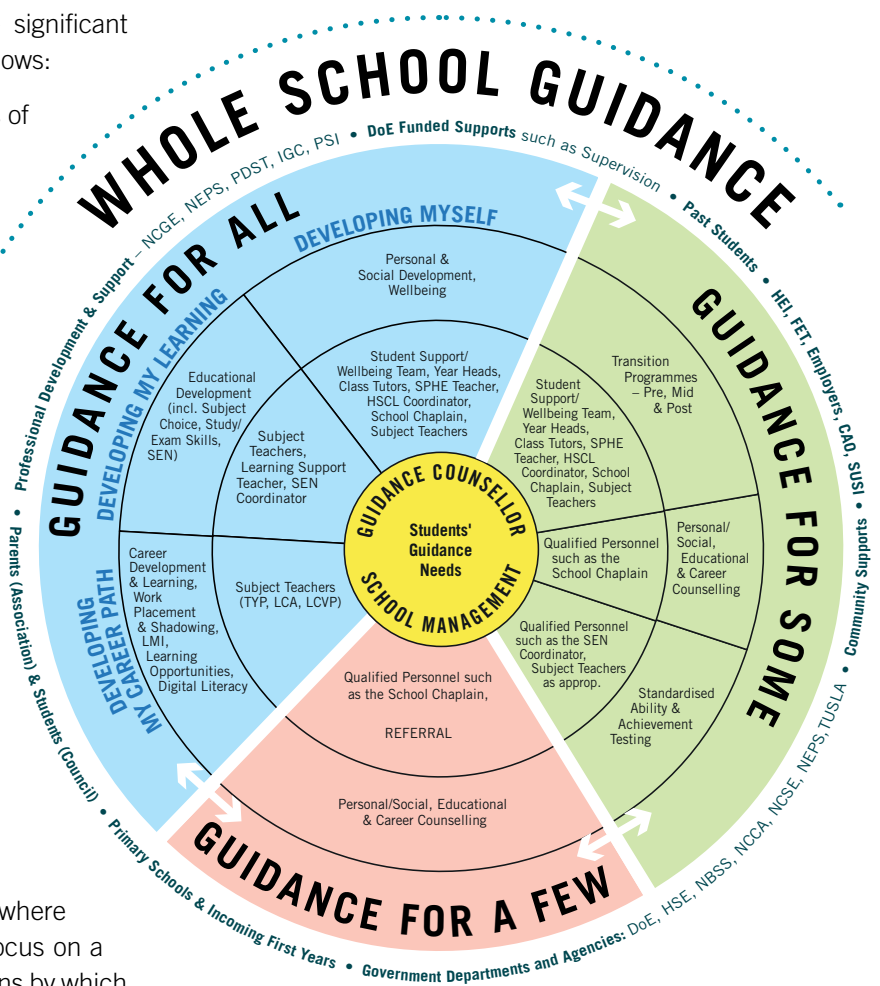
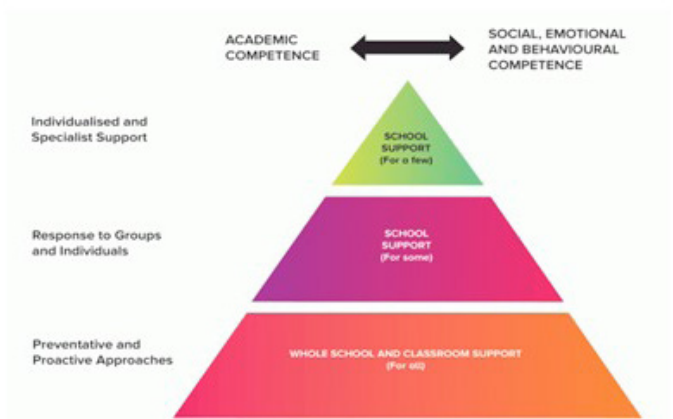
Indeed, for all the similarities within the system and within policy, the barriers to participation for individuals with an intellectual disability, are significant. Five significant barriers to participation were referenced as follows:

- Perceptions, experiences, and descriptions of negative cultural and societal attitudes
- Limited pathways and opportunities that impact on aspirations and goals
- Lack of continuity between child and adult services, and provision of support to manage this transition bridge
- Lack of access to a Guidance Counsellor as schools are not sufficiently resourced to provide this support to students and their families
- An urgent need for greater clarity around options and financial implications, more timely communication of same to alleviate stress and anxiety for pupils and parents

These barriers are significant.

If we wish to move towards a utopian system where all students are supported equally, we must focus on a change in culture in the first instance. The means by which we will change the culture warrants further discussion. However, one element involves reviewing our pathways to ensure opportunities for all. Guidance plays a crucial role in all aspects of minimising and indeed eliminating these barriers for students with an intellectual disability.

Continuum of Support



POST-PRIMARY

De-Mystifying Careers in the Public Sector: A New Schools Initiative!





Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



publicjobs.ie



In this article, Fiona Farrell, Marketing & Communications Executive with the Public Appointments Service describes a new and exciting resource. Ideal for use in classroom settings, the Public Jobs Schools Resource Kit was developed with engagement from multiple stakeholders and piloted across a number of schools. The kit will help to demystify career options in the Public Sector, Ireland's largest employer, for post-primary school students.

 The Public Appointments Service, through its website [Publicjobs.ie](https://publicjobs.ie) recruits for a wide variety of interesting and rewarding roles in the Civil & Public Service. There is often a misconception that careers in the public sector are difficult to access, that entry routes are not clear, and the application process acts as a deterrent for some students.  [Publicjobs.ie](https://publicjobs.ie) has created a new initiative for schools to provide guidance counsellors and teachers with all the information they need to de-mystify the public sector and enable students at post-primary level to make well-informed career choices for the future.

Key Stakeholder - Collaboration & Engagement

Creating an effective programme for post-primary schools involved collaborating and engaging with representatives in the guidance counsellor and education communities, including the NCGE and IGC. We also ran a pilot in 12 schools with students and teachers in senior-cycle to gain insights into what the new career resources should include. The pilot consisted of geographical and strategic representation from a diverse range of post-primary schools, including:

- 7 DEIS schools
- 4 schools in the North-East Inner-City catchment
- Rural and Urban schools: Dublin, Louth, Offaly, Meath, Cork

The initiative, which was part-funded under the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's Public Sector Innovation Fund, is a 'pick up and teach' resource that speaks to the curriculum and is accessible online. The resource kit contains six lesson plans, covering diverse career paths and entry routes into the public sector, as well as employee videos that bring lesser-known roles to life. These include:

- a Customs dog handler with Revenue.
- an economist at the Department of Education.
- a tour guide at the National Botanic Gardens (Office of Public Works).
- an emergency medical controller with the National Ambulance Service.

The resources, which are all free to use, can be found on a dedicated information hub on publicjobs.ie and are available in both **Irish** and **English**.





What our Guidance Counsellors have to say?

The Public Jobs Schools Resource Kit aims to spark interest in the wide variety of career opportunities in the public sector and presents information in a new way for guidance counsellors and other teachers to build confidence around discussing career options with students and their parents. We spoke to guidance counsellors and received some useful feedback.



Brian Comerford, Director at Classroom Guidance commented:

"Student's view of life after school can be too narrow. To broaden and deepen understanding of options available to our school leavers in

the public service is vitally important. These ready-to-go lessons are well thought out, visually interesting with plenty of engaging content, and will challenge some preconceptions of the public service."



Claire Chapman, a Guidance Counsellor at Coláiste Mhuire in Cabra, Dublin 7, an Irish co-educational post-primary school, reviewed the lesson plans and resources. Here is what she had to say:

"Having looked through the resources, I am very happy to say that I would recommend it as a very relevant and user-friendly package for guidance counsellors. It builds up the skills needed for the usual research involved in career investigation and general research." Ms. Chapman added, "I like the videos as they can be used as a standalone entity. Also, I think as an overall package, it is highlighting the relevance, variety and accessibility of "civil service" jobs that may have been overlooked. It is brilliant also that it is translated to Irish as this often is a stumbling block for me when I find a good resource and have to recreate the wheel as Gaelge."

Careers Across the Curriculum

The Public Jobs Schools Resource Kit will also be of interest to teachers across multiple subject areas. We understand different classes will have different learning objectives and timescales. That is why we have adopted a whole-school approach to our resources for post-primary that are easily accessible online for self-directed and in-classroom learning. We know that every teacher plays an important role in encouraging their students to think about their future careers. The following subject areas are examples of how to enhance cross-curricular learning:

- English and Irish - all our lessons are available as Gaelge. Students can research information and analyse public sector roles and qualifications.
- Business - research jobs through [career profiles](#) with real-life public sector employees.
- Digital skills - once students have achieved a level of confidence around the public sector and relevant career opportunities open to them, they can tap into their creativity by entering [The Pitch Schools Advertising Challenge](#)



The Pitch Schools Advertising Challenge – Coming early 2022

Students will have the opportunity to pitch a career in the public sector to their peers and a panel of judges as part of an advertising challenge to be launched in 2022. The Pitch Schools Advertising Challenge is a fun competition whereby students create a video advertisement pitching the public sector as an attractive career pathway to their fellow students. Further details of this will be announced closer to the time. To learn more, visit: www.publicjobs.ie/en/schools/the-pitch-competition



Minister McGrath supports new School's initiative

The Public Jobs Schools Resource Kit was officially launched in the National Botanic Gardens by Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in September 2021, Michael McGrath said:

"The public service offers dynamic careers for ambitious people who want to make a positive contribution to society. The Public Jobs Schools Resource Kit is an excellent resource to spark an interest in young people about the diversity of career opportunities in the public service."

Ireland's largest employer, the Public Sector

At the launch of the new school's resource, Chief Executive Officer at the Public Appointments Service, Shirley Comerford said:

"More than 350,000 people are employed in the public sector in Ireland. It is a wonderful career option that offers the opportunity to contribute positively to Irish life and the society in which we live. The public sector offers clear career progression, as well as ongoing opportunities for upskilling. It presents a real opportunity for us to demystify the public sector for students, and to encourage them to consider a career in the public sector as we continue to develop a talented, diverse public sector that reflects the diversity of Irish society."



Customs dog, Wilson with Charlotte Salter-Townsend, Guide, National Botanic Gardens, Office of Public Works, Alan Foley, Executive Officer, Customs, Revenue, Shirley Comerford, Chief Executive of the Public Appointments Service with Zuzanna Krzeminska from Mount Carmel Secondary School and Madeson Devereaux, from St Mary's Holy Faith, Glasnevin.

Have you registered yet for our free post-primary career resources?

www.publicjobs.ie/schools and
<https://www.publicjobs.ie/ga/scoileanna>

If so, we would love to hear your feedback. Please email us at schools@publicjobs.ie



About the Author

Fiona Farrell is a Marketing & Communications Executive with the Public Appointments Service, the centralised recruiter for the Civil & Public Service. Fiona's education includes qualifications from The Marketing Institute of Ireland, Griffith College, PR Institute of Ireland and the College of Commerce DIT. She also holds a professional qualification in Change Management from the Institute of Public Administration. Fiona has experience in both the public and private sectors, prior to joining the Public Appointment Service, she worked for SchoolDays.ie and spent most of her career as an Account Director at a leading advertising agency. Over the past 18 months Fiona has worked with educators, guidance professionals and public sector organisations on the development of a dedicated programme for post-primary schools.

POST-PRIMARY

Languages and Guidance – Languages Connect have got you covered!



The Government of Ireland 'Languages Connect' awareness raising campaign was launched by the Department of Education and Skills in September 2018 as an integral part of 'Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026'. Languages Connect is facilitated by Post Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI). Recognising the role of the Guidance Counsellor in the context of whole school guidance provision, in supporting students to make the best subject choices and career planning decisions for them and in line with Goal 3.A.1 of the 'Languages Connect Implementation Plan' (awareness raising); NCGE is pleased to publish the article below compiled by Aoife Dungan, Marketing and Communications Manager, PPLI.

There's so much going on this year with Languages Connect. Here are a few of the big projects and events happening that all Guidance Counsellors should know about.

Guidance Resource Booklets

Languages Connect have worked with NCGE to develop a set of resources for Guidance Counsellors to help students develop an appreciation of the importance of languages in the workplace. These include lesson plans and Work Experience Packs for both TYs and LCVP/LCAs. All of these booklets have now been translated and are available as gaeilge.

Hard copies of the Languages Connect Work Experience and Guidance Resources for TY and LCA/LCVP students will be arriving in schools who applied for them in the coming weeks. If you didn't apply for hard copies, but you're still interested in downloading the booklets, check out <https://languagesconnect.ie/guidance-counsellors/>



Primary Language Sampler Module

The new Languages Connect 'Say Yes to Languages' Primary Sampler Modules started in schools nationwide this November. Over 500 Primary schools will try out this new initiative to introduce a language (other than English and Irish) to primary pupils over a 6-week period during the regular timetable. Due to the high demand, the schools will be taking part in the module over all three terms. The aims of the module are to:

- Generate awareness among pupils of the range of languages used by their peers, including Irish Sign Language, in their schools and communities which may help support greater inclusion and appreciation of diversity in society,
- **Encourage uptake of languages at post-primary level,**
- Provide opportunities for increased levels of collaboration among the school community with regard to the celebration of languages and cultures,
- Support implementation of Languages Connect, Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017–2026.

A suite of resources has been produced including lesson plans for teachers and tutors and 'Language Passports' for all participating pupils to show their family and friends. Packs have been sent to participating schools to help support both the teaching and learning, but also awareness raising objectives of the module. More information regarding the modules, tutors and supports are available at

www.languagesconnect.ie/primary

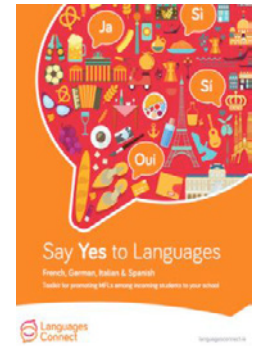


Say 'Yes' to Languages Open Day Toolkit

Another great resource for promoting languages to incoming first years will be arriving in all post-primary schools nationwide in November. This wonderful toolkit will help the Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) department to set up the most engaging and memorable open day events in your school. Included in the toolkit are

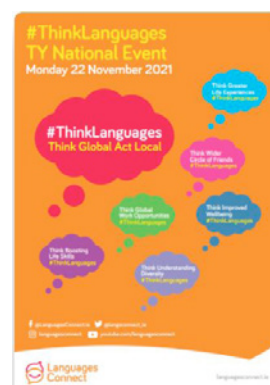
- Tips for hosting open days/ nights in your school for incoming first years and their parents.
- Ideas for engaging the students and their parents with games and online activities.
- Language-specific activities for the four main curricular languages taken in Junior Cycle.

If you're interested or wish to share this with your MFL colleagues, you can check out the online version at <https://languagesconnect.ie/open-night-toolkit/>



#ThinkLanguages

This year #ThinkLanguages was bigger than ever – around 150 schools nationwide took part in #ThinkLanguages in November. Schools nationwide celebrated languages through a mix of workshops, talks, games and activities all with the support of event management kits and online resources from Languages Connect. 12,000 TY students took part in a national celebration of languages and culture.



New Curricular Languages for Leaving Cert – Lithuanian, Mandarin Chinese, Polish & Portuguese

Did you know that Lithuanian, Mandarin Chinese, Polish and Portuguese will be examined as Leaving Certificate Curricular subjects for the first time in 2022? This means that students' oral and listening skills in these languages will be assessed for the first-time next June. Students will be able to take the exam at either Higher or Ordinary Level and these languages will count as a foreign language subject required for matriculation into any third level course with a foreign language requirement.

If any of your students have a proficiency in one of the languages or would be interested in taking it for the Leaving Cert, support is available from Languages Connect and Post Primary Languages Ireland.

Languages Connect Webinar for Guidance Counsellors

If you would like to know more about any of the great resources and events that Languages Connect and PPLI have to promote and support languages in your school, you will be glad to hear that we will be taking part in the NCGE Webinar series this coming February – so keep an eye out for dates and details over the coming weeks. Languages Connect and Post Primary Languages Ireland have a large selection of resources available for Guidance Counsellors and the wider school community to help diversify, enhance and promote the teaching and learning of foreign language skills at post-primary level. If you are interested in hearing more about these, please join us for the webinar in February 2022!



Languages Connect promotes the personal, social, professional and economic benefits of foreign language skills to principals, teachers, guidance counsellors, parents and students. Funded by the Department of Education and facilitated by Post Primary Languages Ireland, as a key objective of the Languages Connect – Ireland's for Foreign Languages in Education 2017 – 2026. For all the latest updates check out www.languagesconnect.ie or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)



About the Author:

Aoife Dungan joined the team in May 2019 and oversees the communications strategy for PPLI and the Languages Connect awareness raising campaign, managing a wide variety of projects, events and media promoting the work of PPLI. Her interest in languages began early, starting German classes at nine years old. Picking up French at secondary school, she went on to study International Marketing and Languages at DCU and immensely enjoyed studying and working in Germany and France during college. After starting her career at IDA Ireland, she moved to New Zealand where she worked with an engineering firm managing their French-speaking clients in far-flung places like New Caledonia, Guadeloupe & Haiti. Having returned from her travels, she undertook a Masters in Strategic Management at DIT. Prior to PPLI she managed marketing campaigns across Europe as International Brand Manager with Aer Lingus. She has a keen interest in other cultures and travel and has always seen huge benefits from foreign language learning.

POST-PRIMARY

College for Every Student Brilliant Pathways programme



Recently retired Principal Patricia Hayden of St. Joseph's Secondary School, Rush, Co. Dublin, describes the positive outcomes of the DEIS school's ten-year involvement with the US NGO College for Every Student Brilliant Pathways programme as part of a collaboration with the Trinity Access Programme. CFES Brilliant Pathways reacted to the Covid 19 pandemic by developing a virtual College and Career Readiness (CCR) mentor training programme adapted for use in Ireland, reflecting the whole school approach to guidance and showing positive results to date.

I first came across CFES (College for Every Student) Brilliant Pathways in 2011 when I committed St Joseph's Secondary School, Rush, to be the pilot school for a collaboration between the Trinity Access Programme and the US NGO known at the time as [College for Every Student](#) (CFES). The collaboration was a game changer for the school and, despite its DEIS status, led to St Joseph's becoming one of the fastest growing schools in the country. Progression rates to third level and further education dramatically improved.

Plain English

The three pillars of CFES chimed with DEIS school planning, but where DEIS planning seemed cumbersome at the time, CFES used language that kept the message direct and accessible. The CFES pillars of Mentoring, Leadership through Service and Pathways to College were easily identified in the practices and work being undertaken by the Guidance Counsellor, the Student Support Team and teachers – CFES provided a framework and language to communicate this work to the wider community.

Research

As part of the collaboration, the Trinity Access Programme undertook extensive research into the efficacy of CFES practices in St Joseph's with very pleasing results. The school continues its association with CFES Brilliant

Pathways, even though the formal collaboration between the Trinity Access Programme and CFES has ceased.

The research focused on the three CFES pillars, but High-Quality Mentoring emerged as the most powerful influence on improving outcomes for students. The Trinity Access research showed that High Quality Mentors Predict Higher:

- Education Aspirations & Goals
- Wellbeing
- Student Voice
- Confidence in College Success
- Student - Teacher Relationships
- Active Engagement in Learning

COVID Challenges – A Virtual Response

In 2020, CFES Brilliant Pathways developed a virtual mentor training programme in response to the challenges posed by the COVID 19 pandemic. **The College and Career Readiness (CCR) Mentor training programme** is delivered through virtual workshops. National experts help participants develop the tools to guide students onto and along the college, further education and career pathway. The training takes place over a week – beginning with a live opening session followed by five pre-recorded sessions viewed by participants at their convenience



and ending with a live closing session. Topics focus on the importance of Mentoring; the Essential Skills; college readiness and paying for college; and careers.

Essential Skills

So what are the Essential Skills? From their research, CFES Brilliant Pathways identified what they call the **Essential Skills**. Knowledge of these key skills is central to the **College and Career Readiness Mentor training** and they are:

- **Goal setting** – Identifying what you want, and how you can achieve it.
- **Teamwork** – Collaborating with others to reach a common goal.
- **Leadership** – Taking charge of your future and helping your peers do the same.
- **Agility** – Adapting and responding to changing circumstances.
- **Perseverance** – The determination to overcome challenges to achieve your goals.
- **Networking** – The art of turning an acquaintance into a supporter.

Irish Pilot and Accreditation

CFES Brilliant Pathways, Trinity Access Programme and the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals piloted the training adapted for an Irish context in three schools.

When participants complete the training, they receive a **College and Career Readiness Advisor certificate** from the University of Vermont and CFES Brilliant Pathways. The training was adapted for an Irish context by the team at Trinity Access, and mentors were asked to complete a survey before and after the training. Each of the pilot schools receives the results of the survey for their school.

The training is repeated each month, with sessions for parents too. Pilot schools have unlimited access to the CCR training, so it is a great opportunity for the schools involved at this stage to develop a consistent approach to mentoring in their school communities.

Preliminary Findings

The Preliminary Findings of the pilot are encouraging. Participants' confidence and knowledge improved across Mentoring, College Knowledge and Mentors Evaluation of the Programme after taking the training.

“It will benefit students as I feel more prepared and educated on how to mentor them, how to guide them and what language to use when discussing their journey while applying to college and deciding on possible future careers”
Teacher, Balbriggan Community College

“I will be able to help them develop the essential skills needed for College/Career. The training allowed me the time to reflect on all the areas required to be a good mentor.”
Teacher, Mercy College Sligo

“It was hugely informative and having a blend of live sessions and asynchronous sessions meant that learning could be done at our own pace. The adaptation for the Irish participants was brilliant as it meant that I know that I can point my mentees in the right direction when it comes to financial aids and various schemes.”
Teacher, St. Joseph's Secondary School

Supporting the Work of the Guidance Counsellor

The great thing about CFES Brilliant Pathways virtual training is that it offers the opportunity to train large numbers of mentors – peers, staff and community. A consistent approach that supports the work of the school guidance counsellor. The idea is simple but effective. One wonders why we did not think of it before now!



About the Author:

Patricia Hayden was appointed principal of St Joseph's Secondary School, Rush in 2007 and recently retired. St Joseph's is a coeducational DEIS school of 830 students. The school is in Fingal which has the highest teenage population in Ireland and is an area of rapid growth.

When Patricia took over as principal in 2007, St Joseph's experienced rapid growth and improvement. St Joseph's was the first school in Europe to become a College For Every Student School of Distinction, it was a pilot school for NEPS Student Support Teams, College Awareness Week and Whole School Approach to Guidance.

Patricia was a member of the 2017 National Taskforce on Youth Mental Health and represented the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals on the Fingal Children and Young People's Committee.

POST-PRIMARY

Opening a Portal to New Skills: Developing Students on Work Experience Placements with the Career Skills Competition



“Developing my Career Path” is a key competence within the whole school guidance framework where students develop their career management skills. The Career Skills Competition, hosted annually by CareersPortal, aims to promote the importance of career skills and encourage the value of career research. It gives students the chance to reflect on the skills they develop during their work experience and explain how those skills can help them in their future career. Eimear Sinnott of CareersPortal writes on how this year’s competition may be valuable to your students and your school.

The Career Skills Competition which is now in its 12th year is aimed at 2nd level students and is linked to their **Work Experience Placement**. The competition will be of interest to Guidance Counsellors, TY, LCA and LCVP Coordinators who can use this exercise to underpin key learning intentions from several different programmes. The competition supports strong cross-curricular links with students being encouraged to use ICT, presentation and creative skills to compete. Some of the key reasons for competing would include the following:

- Links directly to your **Work Experience Programme in Transition Year**
- Links directly to the **Preparation for the World of Work Module** in LCVP and in particular the **Career Investigation**
- Links to the **Vocational Preparation and Guidance Module** in LCA
- Encourages Independent **Career and Educational Research in Senior Cycle**
- Supports an **Awareness and Development of Career Skills**
- Promotes **Self-Reflection**

- Promotes **Literacy** - Written Entries
- Promotes **Creativity** - Vlog Entries
- Can be undertaken in **English** or in **Irish**
- **Fantastic Prizes** for Winning Students in each Category
- **Cash Prizes** for Winning Schools in each Category

The competition is open to all Transition Year and Senior Cycle students with special competition categories for Leaving Cert Applied Programme (LCA), Leaving Cert Vocation Programme (LCVP) and Leaving Cert Established (LCE), for Transition Year and for entries through Irish.

The entry requirements are tailored to meet the specific needs of the different educational programmes and the competition categorises are as follows:

1. Category 1:

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP), Leaving Certificate Applied Programme (LCA) and Leaving Certificate Established Programme (LCE)

2. Category 2:

Transition Year Programme (TY)

3. Category 3:

Best Entries through the medium of Irish

4. Category 4:

Best Vlog Entries

The competition introduces Career Skills to students undertaking a Work Experience Placement.

A student must submit a **Career Investigation**, along with a **Work Experience Report** (TY), and a **Skills Statement** (LCVP/LCE/LCA). A student should be able to demonstrate their understanding of a career, the educational pathways that lead to it and the most relevant knowledge requirements associated with it. They should then be able to mention the most important career skills (transferable/soft skills) needed to be successful in this career. They need to explain which skills they observed being used during their work experience and which skills they felt they had developed. They need to comment on how the work experience has influenced their own career and educational choices. Participation in the competition facilitates a rich understanding of a particular occupation and more importantly the career skills needed to support it.

The submission can be made either in written or Vlog format and we encourage students to be creative in their response. This is truly a cross-curricular approach which can be covered in a number of different classes.

Superb prizes are awarded in each category with the top three entries in each of three categories being awarded a **MacBook Air laptop and €1000** cash prize for each of the winning schools. CareersPortal developed this programme to encourage students to undertake career and educational research and to promote the importance of career skills. We are delighted to welcome AIB as the new sponsor of the **Career Skills Competition 2022**



About the Author:

Eimear Sinnott is co-founder and Managing Director of www.careersportal.ie. She has worked extensively on the development and the promotion of both the site itself and the on-2nd level and adult Guidance Programmes which have been designed to support it. Eimear has 30 years' experience in the technology sector of which the last 20 years have been spent promoting the integration of technology in education. She has worked on many innovative education products in the area of Business, Enterprise, Public Sector and Career Guidance.

CareersPortal.ie was developed in 2008 and www.saoloibe.ie in 2010 with the aim of providing a "one stop shop" for career advice and research in Ireland. The site(s) and the associated resources are a service to those needing or providing career guidance, 2nd Level Students, Graduates, Adult Learners, Job Seekers, Parents and Guardians and Guidance Professionals. The REACH+ Career and College Preparation Programme is a blended 2nd level programme designed to support Guidance, LCVP, LCA, TY, Wellness and ICT across 2nd level schools.



FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Developments and Digital Career Guidance for Adults: The evolution of the “Fastrack Information Technology” (FIT) Programme, an introduction to “StepIn2Tech”



All aspects of life and careers now require an increased application of digital skills. This article by Danielle Barr, Training Services Coordinator at Fastrack into Information Technology (FIT), introduced by NCGE FET Guidance Programme Coordinator, Mary Stokes, highlights ICT skills development programmes. NCGE reflects herein on the crucial role of guidance to support and encourage competence development and career exploration in this area.

Information Technology careers, digitalised career guidance and information service delivery; technology innovation in education, training and employment, and myriad, at times overwhelming, application and information portals, information “hubs” surround everyone on the planet today. It is vital to facilitate informed choice across these opportunities and to promote inclusive, innovative, collaborative thinking for useful, sustainable services, supports and career guidance through the lifespan. Development of useful and cooperative delivery of adult career guidance and information support and an interdepartmental approach to lifelong guidance model is vital to support lifelong learning.

Corralling and enhancing existing career guidance and information provision and expertise to genuinely support lifelong learning and to support uptake of full or part time “upskilling” or “reskilling” opportunities promotes career development, career mobility, career resilience and career sustainability. In this arena, the significant influence and corporate social responsibility in industry can also be harnessed – employers working with their employees will always provide a better outcome for all. Thus, policy led promotion of a free, impartial, and integrated adult guidance model, which places the person as central can encompass community and corporate energy and values

and develop services that provide layers of appropriate, distinct yet collaborative supports. Digital Career Guidance, augmented by human face to face support has excellent potential.

This “two-fisted” approach to the use and application of technology has significance in consideration of emerging and innovative career options, career development and change while also being vital to service delivery, evidence gathering and in delivery of supports to individuals, groups, and communities. However, in the here and now, inequities remain challenging.

As the national representative organisation for Adult Learners, AONTAS’ pre-budget submission 2022, offered the comment *“As we now enter a new era recovering from COVID-19, it is vital that the lessons learned throughout the pandemic do not go unheeded. Inequalities and disadvantages that were exacerbated will not automatically dissipate or improve as time moves on”*

This observation points to the considerable issues regarding inequities driven by the reality of the pandemic and the significance of the “digital divide” which cannot be ignored. This is the divide that confounds; where young adults who appear to use technology with confidence are noted by many to have “drifted” during the global pandemic, not

adapting their digital skills to the learning environment – or the digital divide which amplifies other vulnerable persons, increasing isolation as people in our communities feel “left out”, increasingly distant from education, training, or employment.

<https://www.aontas.com/assets/resources/Submissions/AONTAS%20Pre-Budget%20Submission%202022.pdf>

<https://gpseducation.oecd.org/revieweducationpolicies/#lnode=41761&filter=all>

In AONTAS' submission a range of considered recommendations are offered, and considering the work of National Centre for Guidance in Education, several recommendations stand out – especially the importance of: *“Promotion of Education Pathways: Support and promote free adult education guidance and information services across community and further education”*

So, while industry innovation, “blended” or online education opportunities abound, new training or information sites and platforms appear on almost a daily basis, the challenge to ensure these technology enhanced portals are really making a difference must be considered. The challenges of digital provision must be acknowledged while existing, evolving, and adaptive useful expertise in service provision or in programme delivery is to be celebrated and broadcast.

As noted in **Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025** page 35:

“In focus: demand for tech talent and ICT skills: Technology is one of the key drivers of change in the economy. Globally, ICT is in the midst of a growth and innovation phase which is impacting on businesses across all sectors of the economy... In addition, both the EGFSN study and the FIT Audit also highlights that people with developed ICT skills are not just needed in the Technology sector. Many different types of jobs now require various levels of ICT Skills proficiency. This trend is likely to continue as technology increasingly becomes embedded in business functions and processes across companies and sectors. The continued development and adaptation of new technologies will, over time, result in the emergence of new skillsets, jobs and career paths...”

<https://assets.gov.ie/137349/3b66360a-64f4-45db-881f-eb326950051e.pdf>

Emerging and of significance to Ireland's career guidance community is the evolution of the long-established FET training programme “FIT – Fastrack To Information Technology” and the development of the new programme, “StepIn2Tech”, the FET feature for this Guidance Matters.

This new platform promises to facilitate provider and learner skill development, career exploration and more. FIT's Danielle Barr Training Services Coordinator at Fastrack into Information Technology outlines the developments and innovation to that programme, and the delivery of the new IT programme “StepIn2Tech”:

Who or What is FIT?

FIT (Fastrack to Information Technology) is a representative organisation of the technology sector committed to growing Ireland's tech talent pipeline. FIT's mission is to promote an inclusive Smart Economy by creating routes to marketable technical skills for job seekers and career changers wishing to pursue quality professions in Ireland's thriving digital economy. Through regular skills needs analysis with its industry partners, FIT determines the impact and skills employment opportunities arising from emerging technology trends and designs training programmes that enable a broad and diverse cohort of people to acquire in-demand tech skills identified. Designed for Further Education Training (FET) provision these programmes are delivered with the support and collaboration of Education and Training Boards (ETBs) nationally. FIT tech programmes while responsive to industry demands are built in accordance with requirements and standards of the National Qualifications Framework. In total over 21,000 job seekers have completed FIT skills development programmes to date, of which in excess of 18,500 have secured quality employment. FIT is also the National Coordinator ICT Tech Apprenticeships at NFQ Level 6 and is delivering three apprenticeships programmes in Network Engineering, Software Development and Cybersecurity with a fourth in Cloud Computing currently in development.



The adoption of the Tech Apprenticeship programme by industry has been quite phenomenal and we envisage 500 Tech Apprentices this year, rising to 3,000 by 2023. Already some 150+ Corporates, SME's and Government Departments have availed of this new tech talent pipeline. So 2021, despite the challenges of the pandemic looks like being another extremely busy one for FIT, via continued expansion of the tech apprenticeship programme, adding to and increasing student uptakes on multiple FIT supported training & skills development programmes and driving forward with multiple gender diversity and inclusion activities. However, one of our newest and most exciting training programmes in partnership with Microsoft Ireland is Stepin2tech, with the aim to equip 10,000 people in Ireland with the digital skills required to transfer emerging and in-demand roles within the digital economy.

What is Stepin2tech?

Developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, StepIn2Tech is designed to support anyone who is interested in developing their digital skills. It is a mentored pathway to a career in the technology sector and the latest learning pathway to be added to Microsoft Ireland's Pathways For Life education and training programme. StepIn2Tech complements recently announced government re-skilling initiatives as it aims to bridge a growing skills gap within the Irish economy by providing online skills training that matches the in-demand skills from industry.

Who is it for?

- Senior cycle secondary school students and school leavers
- College students
- Those impacted by the pandemic looking to reset their plans
- Mid-career changers looking to develop digital skills

What does the programme involve?

Each course is completed online and at each student's own pace, deepening their knowledge and skill levels. Students can choose to participate in one or all of the following course subjects:

- Coding
- Infrastructure
- Cloud
- Productivity
- Design
- Soft skills

What are the benefits to the student?

- Opportunity to gain in-demand technical skills from home and at a pace that suits the student. Develop soft skills, learn interview techniques and take your CV to the next level.

- Gain insights to various technology roles in order to choose the most suited career path.
- Experience world-class mentoring from Fastrack to IT's Digi-Chaperones.
- A learning journey that can be completed at the student's own pace.
- A passport to a digital future – digital and professional skills development

Are you a teacher, lecturer, guidance counsellor, parent and know someone that you think would benefit from this programme? Please encourage them to check it out today on www.fit.ie/stepin2tech



What opportunities exist in the tech sector at the moment?

In Ireland, over 12,000 jobs are currently available in the tech sector. Within this growing tech sector, there are several key job roles where the demand for skilled workers outstrips the current supply. StepIn2Tech aims to guide individuals to jobs that meet their career ambitions providing them with both technical and valuable soft skills (CV writing and interview techniques), to help them succeed and prosper in the tech sector. Here are just some of the roles in demand that you or someone you know may be interested in pursuing a career in:

- IT Support / Helpdesk
- IT Administrator Digital Marketer
- Graphic Designer Software Developer
- Data Analyst

Students will develop the technical and soft skills required to either gain an entry-level role in the rapidly growing parts of the economy – either directly in a technology company or within traditional sectors that are becoming increasingly digitised. Upon completion of the StepIn2Tech programme students will have gained the necessary knowledge as to which digital technology career is right for them. Your Digi-Chaperone will guide you to the most suitable pathway, either a new career or continued learning, where you can gain tech skills and certifications from

- FIT Apprenticeships
- Further Education & Training Course
- Hub eCollege
- Microsoft Global Skills Initiative



About the Author:

Danielle Barr is the Training Services Coordinator at Fastrack into Information Technology (FIT)

Euro-Quest Update



Co-funded by
the European Union



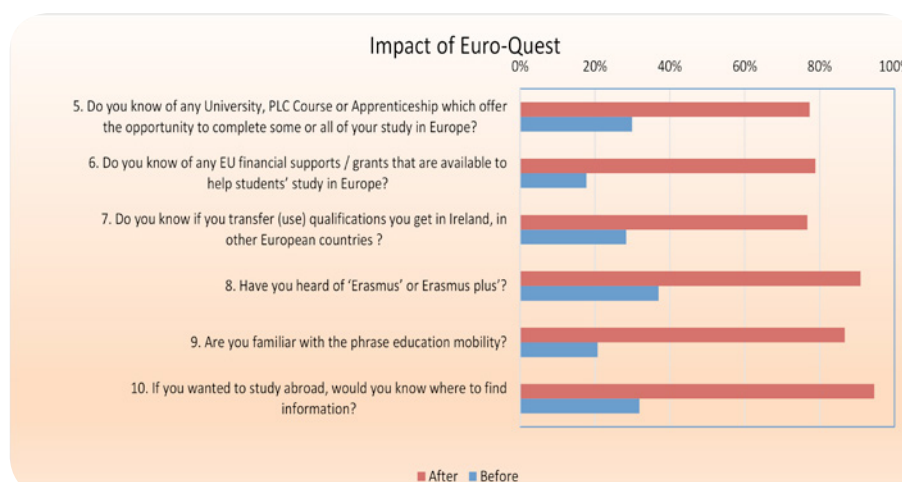
Developed by the National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) / Euroguidance Ireland and launched in 2020, Euro-Quest is a free-to-use programme for Irish post-primary schools promoting educational mobility. This programme is designed to be integrated into the Transition Year (TY) curriculum through Guidance and to link with other subjects using 'Europe' as the common theme.

We are now approaching two years since the official launch of Euro-Quest. To date over 3,200 students from all over Ireland have registered to take part.

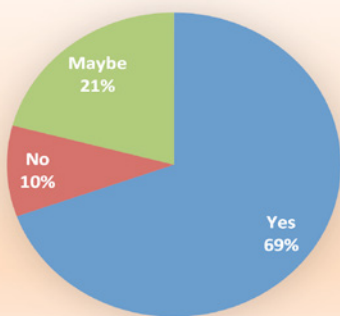
Thank you to those schools who have engaged in the programme and to all students who provide us with their valuable feedback.

What the students are learning

We continue to monitor student response to identify potential opportunities to enhance the resource, and importantly, gauge what impact the resource is having on students. To do this, a series of pre- and post- questions are asked. The results are as follows:



Would you recommend this course to next year's Transition Years in your school?



It is heartening to see that upon completion of the modules, there is a notably positive impact on the students':

- (i) Knowledge of their rights as a European citizen;
- (ii) Familiarity with the language around 'mobility';
- (iii) Awareness of the opportunities and supports available to them when it comes to mobility;
- (iv) Knowledge regarding the transferability of qualifications across Europe; and
- (v) Awareness of the benefits of studying abroad for a period and motivation to do so.

We hope that more students will be given the opportunity to explore these modules in the coming months.

The value of a mobility experience as a method through which an individual can foster important competencies and develop career management skills is unquestionable.

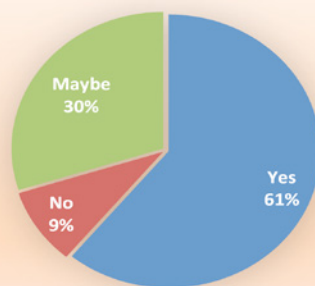
What the students themselves say about Euro-quest

Over 90% of students who responded that they 'would' or 'maybe would' recommend the resource to next year's cohort of Transition Year students.

What the students gained

- It made me think about future
- I learned that you can carry qualifications over from different countries
- I learned a lot about the Erasmus + programme and as a result have a huge interest in participating
- I liked the way it informed me about how to find information on studying abroad
- I learned all the benefits from doing an Erasmus year abroad can give you and how it can contribute to your future career
- I learnt a lot about the history of the European Union and its formation.
- I learned that going abroad can change your perspective on what you want to do
- Learning that (some) courses are taught in English abroad which is something I never knew.

Having completed Euro-Quest, would you be more likely to consider studying / training / doing an apprenticeship abroad?



- How grants work
- I liked the advice the course gave in relation to the build up to going to a foreign country to study. It gave good advice on how to handle homesickness and adjusting to a new culture which is very useful.

To read more about the value placed on a mobility experience see

<https://www.ncge.ie/sites/default/files/NCGE-GM5-Euroguidance-Mobility.pdf>



For resources to support you adding a European dimension to your classroom guidance, see

<https://euroguidance.ie/resources>



To read about the impact of a mobility experience on an Irish student who spent a year studying in Spain, see <https://www.ncge.ie/sites/default/files/GM4-EG-Erasmus-Experience.pdf>



If you have rolled out the programme in your school and have any feedback or ideas for us, we'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch at euroguidance@ncge.ie



If you have not yet signed up to Euro-Quest, please note that this is a free resource available to all post-primary schools. For more information go to

<https://euroguidance.ie/euro-quest>



To sign up visit: www.euro-quest.ie

We look forward to having your school on board.

Euroguidance Network Meeting – October 2021



Employment Service
of Slovenia

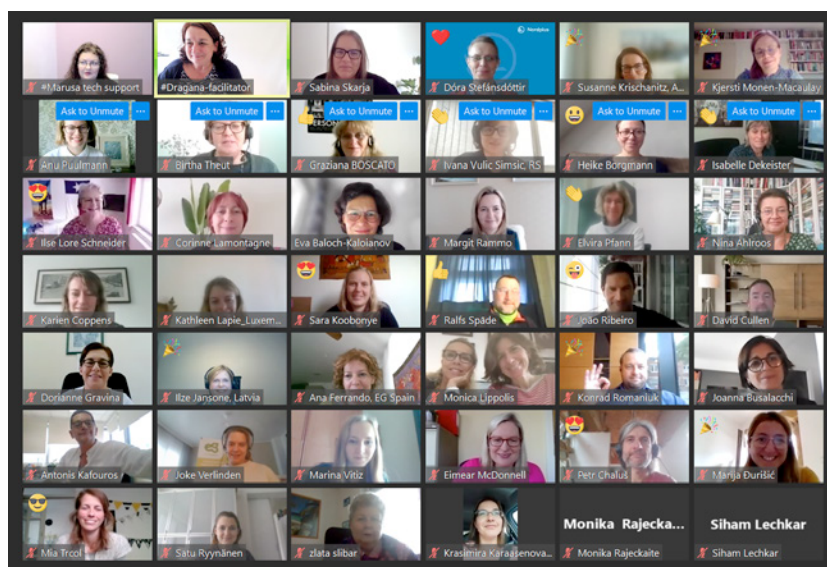


euro | guidance
European Network to Support
Guidance and Counselling



Co-funded by
the European Union

NCGE hosts the Euroguidance Centre for Ireland, part of a Network of Centres throughout 33 European countries linking together the Careers Guidance systems in Europe. The Euroguidance Network is co-funded by the Department of Education in Ireland and the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. NCGE staff members regularly participate in scheduled biannual Euroguidance Network meetings.



The third VIRTUAL Euroguidance Network meeting was facilitated by the Employment Service of Slovenia, host of Euroguidance Slovenia, between the 11th and 13th of October 2021. It was attended by NCGE Communications Officer, David Cullen and (temporary) Euroguidance Officer, Eimear McDonnell. This meeting once again brought together representatives of Euroguidance centres from all over Europe.



Day 1 was occupied by internal Network Task Group coordination and planning.

Day 2 saw the commencement of formal meeting activities. Opening Speeches included a welcome from Mitja Bobnar, General Director of the Employment Service of Slovenia, and Sabina Škarja, Euroguidance Slovenia Coordinator. Special welcome was given to new members from Belgium, Czech Republic, Norway, Poland, Romania and new guest and cooperation partner – Switzerland.

Main priorities of Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU

These were presented by Jurij Snoj, a director of general affairs service at Employment Service of Slovenia and are as follows:

- Striving to facilitate the EU's recovery and reinforce its resilience
- Reflecting on the future of Europe

- Strengthening the rule of law and European values
- Increasing security and stability in the European area

Lifelong career guidance at the Employment Service of Slovenia

Presented by Brigita Vončina, a labour market expert and a psychologist; it was explained that the Employment service of Slovenia is one of the key institutions within the national labour market, accorded through Slovenian legislation, with responsibility for lifelong career guidance.

It was explained that the overall labour market has changed significantly in the last few decades due to many drivers such as digitalisation, automatization and robotization, climate change, migration, globalisation, demography etc. It is therefore even more important than ever that individuals have career management skills and that career counsellors provide services and offer supports that are of genuine benefit.



European Commission: Update on relevant policy developments

Aline Juerges, Policy Officer, European Commission, presented on numerous current initiatives including the [European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan](#), the [European Skills Agenda](#), [Individual Learning Accounts](#), the [European Approach to micro-credentials](#), the [Pact for Skills](#), [Upskilling Pathways](#) and a new [Adult Learning Working Group](#).

Cynthia Mary Harrison Villalba, [CareersNet](#) coordinator and Lifelong Guidance project manager at the Department for learning and employability in [Cedefop](#) presented [CareersNet's first collection of working papers](#):

[Digital transitions in lifelong guidance: rethinking careers practitioner professionalism](#)

Parallel sessions between Network members

Four parallel sessions were held on day 2 under the overall theme of 'national practices for the competence development of guidance practitioners. These covered areas such as 'ideas and experiences of the processes of developing new tools for guidance stakeholders', 'modular training for career guidance practitioners' and 'the development of career guidance at general, special and vocational education institutions.

End of day reflections amongst members included Mentimeter polling and feedback on ideas cultivated thus far. For example, enhanced exchange with colleagues, training for school guidance practitioners, the importance of networking and the need for the sharing of good guidance practices.

Day 3 continued in a similar manner to day 2 with a focus on internal Network collaboration and the development of competence training for Guidance practitioners.

The results of a Euroguidance 2021-2024 'Work Plan Survey' were presented. The aim of the survey being to further coordinate Network level activities more efficiently through the alignment of national workplans and associated objectives.

A workshop on 'the competence development of guidance professionals by Euroguidance' was delivered and members were facilitated to rank ideas generated. Some of these included:

- To combine online and onsite events for guidance professionals with specific attention given to mutual exchange
- The development of a common European e-course / European online training platform incorporating [Europass](#) and Euroguidance 'explainer' media.
- The instigation of an EU-wide conference for guidance counsellors on various topics relevant to their competence development
- The development of a common theoretical framework under the umbrella of the international dimension of guidance
- To develop a pool of trainers at European level - offering webinars on different topics such as sustainable mobility and inclusion

Towards the end of day 3 updates were given by the leaders of the various internal task groups.

Additional reflections took place on potential activities for celebrating and leveraging the upcoming Euroguidance 30-year anniversary (2022) and awareness was raised regarding upcoming national and international guidance events and activities for further dissemination to national stakeholders.

Stay in touch

Don't forget by going to www.euroguidance.eu you can find out more about Guidance systems in Europe, review the latest editions of the Network's 'Insight' and 'Highlights' publications, check out upcoming European Guidance events, webinars, and lots more. There you can also subscribe the Euroguidance Network monthly newsletter, past issues can be seen at <https://mails.euroguidance.eu/archive>

Also keep an eye out for our Euroguidance Ireland newsletter- you can subscribe [HERE](#)



“Guidance professionals deserve all the support they can get”



NCGE staff work with over 100 European colleagues who are active members of the Euroguidance Network. One of these colleagues is Dóra Stefánsdóttir, Special Adviser at the Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannís). As Dóra reaches the end this stage of her career journey, she recently agreed to an interview with another Euroguidance colleague from the Finnish National Agency for Education.

At the brink of her career, Dóra Stefánsdóttir is looking back to decades in international guidance. Dóra works for the **Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannís)**, in charge of the Erasmus+ programme and various international projects. She has experience also from the EU level coordination of guidance and vocational work in Africa. Dóra admires guidance professionals for their demanding work.

Dóra, what is your relationship with guidance?

Most of my professional life, I have been involved in education and training. I have been the manager of Euroguidance in Iceland for some twenty years and have had the pleasure to work with guidance counsellors, but I am not trained as a guidance counsellor. Their work is very demanding and they need all the support they can get.

Rannís also functions as a one stop shop for a large group of institutions which are looking for support. You could say that the closest I come to guidance is helping people who come to our Information Office for Studies Abroad. There are many questions they need the answer to when thinking about whether to study abroad. It is not a small decision to leave your family and friends behind and take a leap into the unknown. We try to give them information which they can work with rather than advice, and I admire greatly information services in many countries which give clear and precise info.



I have been told that you worked both in Africa and in Greece?

Yes, I worked in Africa for six years in total, four in Namibia and two on the Cabo Verde islands. I was working for the Icelandic International Development Agency. In both cases, education was a part of my work and I enjoyed it immensely. In Cabo Verde it was mainly geared towards women, who often lacked even basic education. I worked with a local women's association which was teaching them to read and write but also to make clothes and to take care of their children. The children were the sole responsibility of the mother and the grandmother and they needed to be able to bring them with them to the social hall where the classes took place. The women took turns looking after the children while the others learned and there was often a lot of noise and fun.

In Namibia it was the education of fishermen which fell under my project. When the country became independent, the foreign fishing fleet which had previously fished everything, finally left. There were no Namibians with the necessary skills to take over and the first officers of their research vessel all came from Iceland. They needed to train the men (no women were among then first crew) who worked on their research vessel. It was quite difficult since they had no language in common. It was a question of endless patience showing them over and over again how to manage. After I left Namibia, Iceland and Norway joined hands in opening a fisheries school in Namibia and one or two men (there were no women in this first crew) of this first crew managed to get a certificate as navigation officers.

In Greece I worked for four years at **Cedefop**, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. My job consisted mostly of gathering information about vocational training in different countries. It was very interesting to see how different it is from one country to another and the goal to lift the barriers from one country to another seems to be as unobtainable now as when I was working there.

You mainly work with Nordic/Baltic projects these days?

That is correct. I am in charge of **Nordplus Nordic Languages** which offers grants for cooperation in all the Nordic languages. All the Nordic languages are small on the world front and we need to assist each other in keeping them alive. It is a great pleasure to see the interest of a

wide host of partners in creating new learning methods and material accessible to everyone.

I have also started working on a new project dealing with education towards sustainable development. It forms a part of the vision of the Nordic Council of Ministers to make the Nordic countries the most integrated and sustainable region in the world by 2030. The plan is to make education towards sustainability (and not education about sustainability) an integrated part of learning at all levels in the Nordic countries. We will work with a large number of institutions, for instance universities providing training for teachers, teachers' associations and NGOs. Very important are also the young people, they will be the biggest group who will receive the training.

What do they want and how do they want it delivered?

We are just starting and there are so many questions yet to be answered.

But now you will be leaving, what do you intend to do?

By the end of April, I will start my third age, i.e., go on retirement. My main problem will be to have enough time and health to do everything I would like to. I dream about travelling, translating or writing, enjoy nature and last, but by no means least, to study. There are many subjects I would like to emerge myself into, from literature to arctic development, not to mention learning a new language or two. Arabic sounds fascinating and so does Persian.

Maybe I need to see a guidance counsellor....???



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SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

My ADHD story & 3 Ways Positive Psychology can support ADHD Learners with Career Decision Making



Becoming a Guidance Counsellor requires personal reflection on who we are and where we want to go with our careers! Sharing personal stories behind our own career journeys will serve to inform our understanding of and work with students or adult clients. In this article, Aisling Haugh shares her personal information and journey to the benefit of us all.

“Creativity, planning, and problem solving are all key components of the career decision making process, applied interchangeably at every juncture over a lifetime. Building this capacity in an ADHD world is no small feat. It could, in essence be the great teaching task of our time”

Aisling Haugh, NCGE Guidance Matters, Issue 5, 2020

I wrote that in my last piece for this publication. It's true, we teach what we most need to learn.

Picture my Mum's kitchen on a sunny Saturday afternoon. My mother and sister sitting at the table heads tilted, curiously watching me; the way ducks tilt their heads when something seems off (google that; I did and lost 20 minutes). I am flicking the kettle on which, ordinarily, is a one act show. Grab kettle, fill, return to socket, plug in, wait, tea.

For me, I'm only loosely aware of the kettle. I 'feel' a thirst for tea, but the kettle is eight layers of attention away; it sits behind an idea for a blog post, the christening gift I left to a

friend last week without a card (why can't I get that right? I'm not as 'nice' as other friends), the uneven tip of my middle fingernail boring a hole in my head, the impulsive response I gave to my boss last week and the reeking scent of cat in mum's kitchen that apparently nobody else can smell; that, and the incessant burn in my brain that rarely stops without conscious effort.

The ball of tangled wire in my head means I have zig zagged the kitchen without pause for the time it takes to discuss tea and boil a kettle. I've opened and closed the fridge, bread box, and biscuit bins twice, each with no follow through and so I arrive at the table empty-handed; I sit and forget about the tea until I'm reminded. Nine out of ten projects end like this, and, with nobody waiting for a finished product, i.e., tea, they can fall entirely to the wayside to be replaced by the next intrigue. People with weak executive function skills have a difficulty corralling disparate ideas and moving from step to step in a lengthy process. (Wright, R, 2013). I concur.

Sister: *Mum, there's something wrong with her isn't there? I mean, she is not right. (watching bewildered from the kitchen table)*

Mum: *Mmmm, you know they were on at me for years to have her tested, but I never followed it up.*

Me: *What?*

Mum: *Yeah, they did actually.... for ADHD or something. I never got around to it. Well, aren't you lucky I didn't? They'd have drugged you up to your eyes and where would that have gotten you?*

That conversation sparked a flurry of dot-connecting, like magnets connecting myriad frames from my life. Teachers made sure I didn't sit near windows, friends or exits. A very senior teacher in their frustration with a bright but insanely scattered mind felt obligated to make explicit what **'a total waste of time; theirs, teachers, and peers'** I was; this despite my excelling in that subject.

I hardened a bit that day, and I carried those words like lead in my diaphragm for a very long time. I know now that person had no idea how to relate to someone so seemingly careless and absent minded. Maybe I triggered them. Maybe they saw my inattention as selfish and reckless; a conclusion drawn by many adults around me at that time.

The restaurant where I continuously forgot about and burned bread and who threatened to have me work an additional hour a day to cover it. The French chef who bellowed over my 12-month placement *'Aisling, I know exactly what you do all day because you leave a trail of destruction; LISTEN to me!'* I did my best and promptly abandoned hotel management upon graduating.

There is a look people give when you've let them down and every look, I've ever seen, is stored in my chest cavity. We associate ADHD with psychological distress, feelings

of inadequacy, low self-esteem, and chronic stress. For me, that arose from a self-perpetuating loop of efforting, failing and trying again to do things in a way that I cannot do them, to please the majority in a way I can never please them.

Dr Patricia Quinn suggests clues which may point to ADHD in young women, changing college major frequently being the first. I entered University in 1997 and finished five years and four courses later.

During my MA in Coaching Psychology, some senior lecturers and experienced peers were often frustrated with my mental looping during peer practice coaching sessions.

'You're on the bus, you're off the bus.....what do you want?'

A senior lecturer snapped at me one day. I wish I knew then that the simple act of **grounding and breathing** would have yielded an entirely different outcome for both of us.

I guess you could call him a victim of my ADHD. I mean, if you could see the pain, confusion, and frustration on all these people's faces over the years, you would donate to a national support service for them. I feel like they are all victims of my chaos. They're screaming silently *'Look what you're doing to my classroom, my sense of competency, my credibility, my expectations, my rules, my paradigms... Look...you're shaking them. Stop it!'*

Ok, burning bread I get. I would fire myself or, I could choose to **lead with strengths** and align work tasks accordingly.

I love food, and I'm obsessed with excellence (though you wouldn't think it reading this) and that employer spotted it. I was assigned cook to order jobs and all plate prep, and I was brilliant. Happy customers, happy owner. I was not allowed within a hair's breadth of inventorying, frozen supplies or any task that involved oven baking and recall.



Everything I needed was (to be blunt) in front of my face or within arm's reach. No walking away to get distracted. I did that job for three summers working like a clock. Our food received consistent rave reviews.

There's a silver lining to living with the neurodiversity that manifests in attention regulation issues.

I can only do what I love. There's no middle ground. No confusion. No compromise to be had and very often with ADHD minds, there is excellence in our niche strengths.

Accepting how I am in the world, leading from my strengths, and using mindfulness to support executive functioning have been key for me. I learned to keep work lean, simple, and outcome focused. I keep clocks and notebooks everywhere. I will not remember your birthday; there are years where I haven't remembered my own, but I don't judge that as a benchmark of inherent 'goodness' anymore, and if you do, I doubt we'll be friends.

My experience of strength-based living through principles inherent in positive psychology is cemented in the book '*Delivered from Distraction*' where the authors state the best way to change a life of frustration into a life of mastery is by developing talents and strengths, not just shoring up weaknesses' (Hallowell & Ratey. 2005).

When it comes to career coaching and guidance, executive functioning are the very skills that one needs to navigate through the career assessment, exploration, research, and decision-making processes. Therefore, the coaching process with young [people] with ADHD needs to offer encouragement, provide structure, include accountability, yield some benchmark results at key intervals, and still allow for self-reflection and self-determination (Wright, 2013).

Above all is to lead with acceptance, self-compassion and to concentrate on the celebration of strengths. Here are 3 positive psychology interventions that could support

such work. They might be very useful for neurodiverse (and neurotypical) learners in your care. I have benefitted exponentially from them and enjoyed the energy and fun they generate in group settings.

- Strong Songs: If you go to [HERE](#) you can download a strengths workshop I have adapted from Boniwell & Ryan's 'Personal Wellbeing Lessons for Secondary Schools (2012).
- Positive Role Models (Richard Branson is mine; find them, research their stories, share in a group setting, bed their learning into life) we need to see it to be it.
- Eco Meditation is a powerful evidence-based meditation proven to change brain states. It's long but students seem to love it. Try [HERE](#)



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Aisling Haugh has worked as a Guidance Counsellor at Kilrush Community School, Co. Clare since 2008. She has also worked as a regional facilitator with the PDST Wellbeing team (Post Primary). She holds an MA in Applied Positive and Coaching Psychology from UCC and the Graduate Diploma in Guidance Counselling from UL. Her interests include human potential, Positive Psychology, entrepreneurship and delicious food!

EUROPE IN PRACTICE

International teenage career indicators – an update



NCGE continually works and collaborates with our European and International colleagues on guidance policy and practice. We welcome international research, information and advice on supporting young people and adults on their lifelong learning and career journey. In this article we are delighted that Anthony Mann (has once again) agreed to highlight the ongoing work of OECD in providing vital research and data to support guidance policy and practice developments globally. Reflecting on the concept of Career Readiness provides further evidence of the need to ensure the development of guidance competences of Developing Myself, Developing My Learning and Developing my Career Path, as per the NCGE Whole School Guidance Framework from 1st year in our post-primary schools



The [OECD Career Readiness project](#) makes unprecedented use of longitudinal datasets to identify teenage career-related activities, experiences and attitudes that relate to better than expected employment outcomes in adulthood. Since the [previous issue](#) of Guidance Matters, the project team has published a range of papers setting out the analysis behind 11 confirmed indicators of better teenage career readiness alongside advice for schools and policy officials on how benefits can be optimised. If you would like to see an overview of the project and its results, a summary rich in infographics is [available](#) – and perhaps most useful for practitioners to see is our short paper “Career Readiness in the Pandemic: Insights from new international research for secondary schools.”



Analysis of national longitudinal datasets in ten countries (including Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, but unfortunately not Ireland) provides especially valuable evidence of what works in career guidance. In following large groups of people through adolescence and into adulthood, these datasets allow analysts to take account of the factors that typically influence how well people do in work (such as academic achievement, gender, socio-economic background, geographic location). We can then investigate distinctive aspects of young people's lives to see if they are associated with lower unemployment rates, higher wages and greater job satisfaction than would be typically expected. Generally, the studies look at what teenagers were doing or thinking around age 15 and then ask how they are doing in the jobs market at age 25. In this new blog, we summarise the patterns uncovered across countries and highlight 14 questions which the research prompts for secondary schools.

In three working papers



- Career Ready? How schools can better prepare young people for working life in the era of COVID-19
- Thinking about the future: Career readiness insights from national longitudinal surveys and from practice
- Indicators of teenage career readiness: an analysis of longitudinal data from eight countries

We review existing research literature and undertake new analysis of national longitudinal datasets. Indicators are confirmed where relationships are found in at least three countries between teenage activities, experiences and attitudes and better employment outcomes. We group the indicators into three themes.

Better employment outcomes can be expected in adulthood where secondary school students have...		
explored potential futures through participation in:	experienced potential futures in work through:	thought about potential futures in work as witnessed in greater:
Career talks or job fairs	Volunteering	Career certainty, naming an anticipated occupation in adulthood
Workplace visits or job shadowing	Part-time working	Career ambition, anticipating employment in professional or managerial roles
Career conversations with friends, family members and school staff		Career alignment, planning on undertaking education typically sufficient to enable access to anticipated employment
Programmes to develop recruitment skills, such as CV workshops and interview skills		Instrumental motivation, where students see the value of their education to their plans for employment
Short occupationally focused programmes within general education		

In a series of short papers, we dig into what these indicators mean for practice and draw on international research and examples from practitioners:

"Getting the most out of employer engagement in career guidance"

"Getting a job: How schools can help students in the competition for employment after education",

"Career conversations: Why it is important for students to talk about their futures in work with teachers, family and friends"

"Experiencing the workplace: The importance and benefits for teenagers"

Two short papers look at implications for professionals working to give young people the best possible preparations for adult life. A first paper takes the

perspective of people whose work is to design the policies and programmes that are used by schools:

"Indicators of teenage career readiness: Guidance for policy makers." A second paper is "Career Readiness in the Pandemic: Insights from new international research for secondary schools". It summarises findings and draws out implications for secondary schools, including fourteen questions of relevance to schools seeking to ensure their guidance provision is aligned with these international predictors. The limitation of our research means that we cannot be certain that the indicators work in the same way in every education system and labour market, but the frequency with which they are found certainly prompts questions that all systems would be well advised to ask.



Fourteen questions for school leaders considering confirmed indicators drawn from longitudinal analyses

1. Does your school help all students through secondary education to engage regularly with people in work through career fairs and especially career talks?
2. Does your school have a programme of workplace visits and/or job shadowing which enables all students to critically investigate workplaces for themselves?
3. Does your school teach students how to apply for a job, including interview practice?
4. Does your school help students to reflect on their existing and planned education and training choices in light of what they are learning about their career ambitions and the requirements of desired employment?
5. Does your school know if students are engaging in career conversations about their career plans?
6. Does your school have a policy to encourage and enable a culture of career conversations?
7. Does your school have confidence that all students will have first-hand experience of work before leaving secondary education?
8. Does your school give all students the opportunity to experience work of interest for themselves on two or more occasions?
9. Does your school help students to prepare for and reflect on their first-hand experiences of work?
10. Does your school know what the occupational expectations of your students are?
11. If students are uncertain, does your school they have a process for investigating what is behind the uncertainty?
12. Does your school know how ambitious your students are and have policies in place to encourage and enable high ambitions?
13. Does your school know if your students' occupational and educational plans are aligned?
14. Does your school know if your students are able to see a clear relationship between their educational experiences and later employment outcomes?

To stay in touch with the Career Readiness in the Pandemic project: visit <https://www.oecd.org/education/career-readiness/> and/or email career.readiness@oecd.org to join our free monthly mailing list for project updates. As it continues, it will focus on highlighting detail examples of practice that align with the new analysis, how digital technologies can enhance guidance and how guidance can address inequalities and enable access to 'green' jobs.



About the Author:

Anthony Mann is Senior Policy Analyst (Education and Skills) at the OECD. You can stay in touch with new publications, identify practice to share globally, sign up to receive the monthly newsletter and help shape future work by emailing Anthony.Mann@oecd.org. Twitter: [@AnthonyMannOECD](https://twitter.com/AnthonyMannOECD)

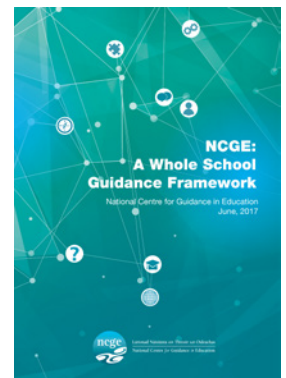


RESEARCH

Research on Whole School Guidance in Post-Primary schools



‘Guidance’ in post-primary schools has evolved significantly in line with contemporary policy over the past number of years. The publication of the key document, ‘A Whole School Guidance Framework’ (NCGE, 2017), provides a support for schools to plan and deliver a well-co-ordinated and comprehensive programme which will meet the needs of all students. Indeed, the Whole School Guidance Framework is a resource for schools to support the planning, design and delivery of the whole school guidance programme in line with the requirements of the Education Act (1998) and all other contemporary education policy and guidelines. In this article, Carol Guildea, NCGE Guidance Programme Coordinator, Post-Primary, outlines two pieces of research that will be undertaken by NCGE in the near future.



The contemporary model of Guidance in post primary schools is evolving towards a continuum of support, with a clear focus on three particular areas of learning (personal/ social development, educational development and career development) and the associated competencies. ‘Appropriate’ guidance in post-primary, as referenced in the Education Act 1998 (9c) must be extended to students of both senior and junior cycle (DES, 2020).

The National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) is an agency of the Department of Education and is responsible for supporting and developing guidance practice. Given the evolution of guidance as outlined, the NCGE collaborated with several partners to develop and

coordinate resources and support for schools as Guidance Counsellors. In particular:

- ‘Guidance Related Learning’ lessons were developed for classroom based teaching of 1st to 3rd year students. [Guidance Related Learning Resources - Junior Cycle](#) | NCGE - National Centre for Guidance in Education
- ‘Reimagining post-primary work experience’ opportunities and resources for TY, LCVP and LCA students were assembled and a comprehensive programme was piloted during academic year 2020-2021. [‘Reimagining Work Experience’ - Pilot Resources](#) | NCGE - National Centre for Guidance in Education



Guidance Related Learning (GRL) for Junior Cycle Students

The GRL units of learning, compliment and assist the whole school guidance programme for junior cycle students as they can be delivered through short courses and the Wellbeing programme. Each unit can be linked with the indicators of Wellbeing: being Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected and Aware (DES 2017). The GRL lessons are also linked to the Junior Cycle 'key skills' such as Managing Myself, Managing Information & Thinking, Staying Well, Communicating and Working with Others (DES, 2015). Through incorporating these lessons into the guidance programme, the guidance counsellor can plan and deliver learning outcomes associated with the Framework for Whole School Guidance (2017), the Framework for Junior Cycle (DES 2015) and the Guidelines for Wellbeing (DES 2017).

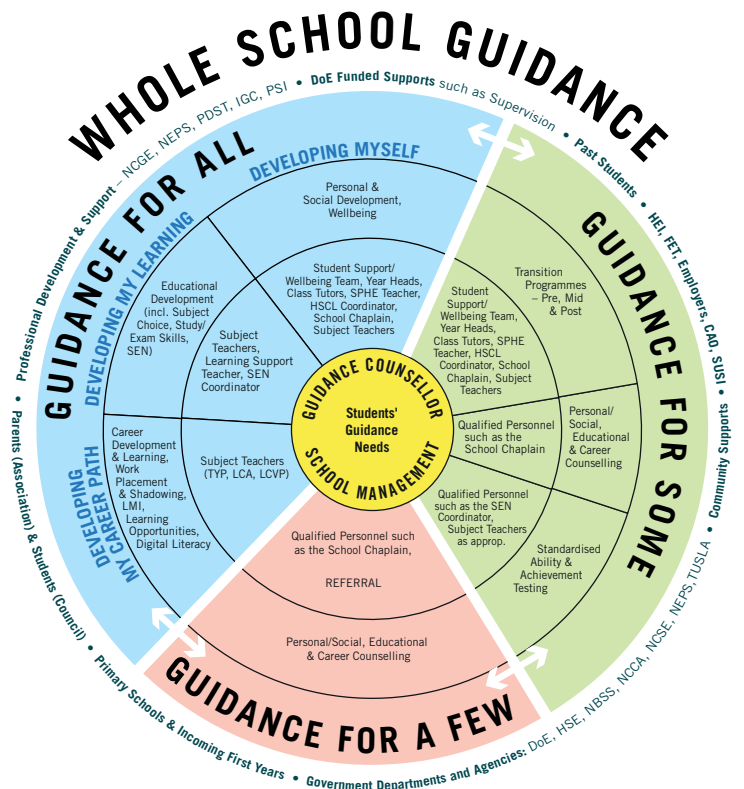
A proposal for 'Guidance Related learning for Junior Cycle' research is currently being compiled. It is aimed that NCGE will carry out a pilot in schools nationwide to measure the impact and effectiveness of the content of the units of learning. The perspectives of Guidance Counsellors, students and school management will be included.

If you think your school might be interested in taking part in this research, please contact me.

Reimagining Post Primary Work Experience

'The use of digital technology and big data to deliver and personalise education continues to grow.' (STEM Education Review Group, 2016 p.37). This pilot focused on work experience and aimed to broaden the scope of a student's experience and exposure to opportunities by enhancing opportunities through innovative technology while simultaneously integrating 21st Century skills for learners as they access the multiple resources available to them (STEM Education Review Group, 2016). As part of the 'Reimagining post-primary work experience' pilot, Guidance Counsellors and students completed a survey on their experience. NCGE are currently working on the data generated from this pilot and will publish an academic paper on same in the near future.

As noted in A Whole School Guidance Framework. 'a comprehensive whole school guidance programme' will meet the needs of all students (NCGE, 2017 p6). By researching the impact and reception of previously developed resources, the NCGE can ascertain the value of these resources. This is critical in order for NCGE to effectively inform policy development, to support the work of schools and Guidance Counsellors at a local level and to ensure all students have access to 'appropriate' Guidance.



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