

Recommendations of the Project CAREER on Integration of Lifelong Career Guidance Contents and Activities into the Slovenian Educational Space

Suitable Adoption of European Guidelines and Conceptualisation

Findings

The definitions of lifelong career guidance in the key EU documents indicate two (not necessarily complementary) goals: individuals adjusting to the labour market, and individuals' autonomous and responsible functioning in contemporary society.

Individual strategic, legislative and operational documents that are concerned with, and govern, the field of education in Slovenia, and the practices of Slovenian schools, include a number of different guidelines, activities, objectives and terminological definitions of lifelong career guidance that, only to some extent, follow the contemporary theoretical framework and the concepts of lifelong career guidance.

Recommendations

Special attention needs to be paid to a suitable conceptual understanding of lifelong career guidance (adapted to the national context). This understanding should be based on:

a) in-depth critical reflection of its definitions within the European and wider international arena;

b) contemporary theoretical frameworks and results of secondary analyses of existing data obtained as part of international comparative assessment studies, other education-related studies and primary research from this field.

Clearly defined objectives, a uniform definition and consistent terminology of lifelong career guidance need to be included in all strategic, legislative and operational documents governing this field.

Empowering Actors for Co-ordinated Action at National Level

Findings

The co-ordination role of the counselling services and the ability to carry out lifelong career guidance activities in a systematic and comprehensive manner in co-operation with other actors in the Slovenian educational space are limited by:

- a) inadequately defined norms and standards of the counselling services' work;
- b) (in terms of formality and sustainability) inadequately defined roles of other individual actors (teachers, school administration etc.);
- c) lack of actors' awareness of the significance of lifelong career guidance for young people's personal, social and career development.
- d) discontinuous (project-based) funding of organisations that provide the counselling service with expert support in its implementation of lifelong career guidance activities.

Recommendations

It is advisable to ensure suitable systemic conditions (target-oriented standards) that will, in a systematic and comprehensive manner, make sure that all students are provided with quality lifelong career guidance services, while also allowing that these services can be adapted to the specific needs of individual students and generations.

It would also make sense to supplement the co-ordination role of the counselling service with a supporting role in raising awareness and empowering other actors (teachers, parents etc.) in regard to the significance of lifelong career guidance and its effective approaches.

Counsellors need to be provided with appropriate forms of professional development and continuous professional support in terms of lifelong career guidance.

Development of Appropriate Contents, Methods and Approaches

Findings

In Slovenia, the exploration of the contents of personal and social development across all levels of primary and secondary education is not thoroughly systematically regulated. Considering the contemporary theories and conceptualisation of lifelong career guidance, there is room for improvement in regard to the integration of the contents of young people's personal, social and career development in Slovenia.

Recommendations

The interrelatedness of personal, social and career development needs to be established and developed by taking into account the contemporary definitions of career management skills. It is advisable to ensure continuous exploration of these contents that is coherent and connected throughout individual three-year cycles of primary and lower-secondary school as well as upper-secondary school. These contents can be explored by:

a) developing an inclusive climate within individual classes and the school, and by building learning communities, introducing active learning methods, promoting collaborative learning and developing self-regulated learning strategies;

b) introducing a subject, the central aim of which is personal development, a subject that would, in the final three year-cycle, be expanded and also more centred around learning about and looking into adolescents' career aspirations.