



*Gérer les transitions: l'orientation tout au long de la vie dans l'espace européen*  
17-18 Septembre 2008, Lyon, France

**Developing lifelong guidance policy, research and practice – recent developments and policy implementation in the EU Member States**

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**Christian Lettmayr, CEDEFOP**

Around 7,5 million young people between 15 and 29 years old, 38 % of all unemployed do not have a job today in the European Union. Unemployment rates of the young remain high at around 16 %.

A recent forecast published by CEDEFOP confirms a considerable labour market need for people with a sound vocational education. Almost 55 million of a total of 105 million job openings in the years between 2006 and 2020, including replacements as well as new jobs, will require medium level qualifications, which traditionally include vocational education and training qualifications. By comparison about 41 million jobs will require high qualification levels, and only for the remaining 10 million jobs low levels of qualifications will suffice.

It is common knowledge today that rapid technological development has created and continues to create new occupational profiles and demand for completely new sets of skills. Skill requirements for most and even for very traditional jobs have been changing fundamentally.

Securing employability means for most of us constant updating of our skills and for many acquiring completely new skills during their lifetime.

Our complex systems of educational and training opportunities in formal as well as non-formal and informal settings are not very transparent for most individuals and require career planning and choices between different opportunities.

In addition, young people are becoming an even more valuable resource in an aging society from a purely economic point of view and regardless of social considerations, which make a successful transition from education to labour market and integration indeed very important objectives under any circumstances.

It is against this background that successful policies and schemes for guidance and career counselling have become a political priority.

Let me also underline at this point that it is not only the securing of employability and the successful search for a job, any job, which is at stake. It is also the discovery of individual strengths and the development of personal talents which is important and which requires careful development so that the individual will find a fulfilling occupation best suited to its potential and interests and not merely a job which secures his or her livelihood.



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Ladies and gentlemen, it is a great pleasure and honour for me to be today with you.

The fact that the French presidency has chosen to focus one of its conferences on Lifelong Guidance underlines the policy relevance of the topic. Successful guidance is key if Europe shall achieve the objectives of the Education and Training 2010 programme. It is a key element for lifelong learning strategies and securing employability and thus vital in the context of the EU's strategy on growth and employment.

Cedefop is the European Unions agency for the development of vocational education and training in the Member States. It is a tripartite organisation, closely connected to the governments and social partners in the Member States and cooperates closely with the European Commission. It contributes in many ways to the implementation of the education and training 2010 programme of the Commission, by providing scientific input and a platform for discussions of the various stakeholders.

Cedefop has recently concluded three major studies in the field of guidance. Cedefop is presently also finalising a policy report which will cover developments in the years 2006 to 2008 and is based on the contributions Cedefop has solicited and received from the responsible General Directorates in the national governments, contributions of our ReferNet partners, which is Cedefops network of expertise in vocational education and training (), as well as the research and work of the experts at Cedefop. This report will be presented to the ministerial conference which will be held under the French Presidency in Bordeaux in November 2008.

On these inputs, as well as on the work of our experts more generally, I have based my following contribution which mainly tries to reflect the development of guidance policies in the last two years and will be structured along the five priorities as they have been identified by the Council resolution of 2004.() These five priorities concern: *lifelong guidance systems; access to guidance; quality assurance; citizens' lifelong learning and career management skills; structures for policy and strategy development.*

### **1. Implementing lifelong guidance systems**

The analysis of data shows that most Member States have made an effort to establish comprehensive lifelong guidance systems at national and regional levels and across sectors. Nonetheless, the establishment of well-functioning comprehensive lifelong guidance system has not yet become a reality in all the countries and remains to be a major challenge.

Developing legal instruments and strategy frameworks are (evolutionary) steps towards a lifelong guidance system. New guidance legislation or legislation on education-training and on employment with guidance as an integral element has been launched in several countries (BG, CZ, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, IT, LT).

For example, in 2005 France introduced a *Guidance and planning law for the future of the school*. This law sets out priorities for raising the standard of training for young



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people and commits the national education system to improve organisation and management.

In Spain, the *Royal Decree 395/2007* has been adopted to develop an integrated system of information and professional guidance to ensure the relationship between training and employment opportunities and reflect the possibilities of recognition and accreditation. Additionally, the Spanish *Organic Law on Education (2006)* states that the public administrations are responsible for facilitating access to information and orientation on lifelong learning offers.

In Bulgaria, the *Law on the Encouragement of Employment* (updated in 2007) deals with the licensing of information centres for career guidance. The aim of the law is to stimulate future developments of career guidance and it is expected that the first centres for information and career guidance will be registered by the end of 2008.

Many Member States have actively introduced lifelong learning strategies that often include a strategy for lifelong guidance (AT, BE, CY, CZ, DK, FI, FR, IE, IS, LV, NO, SI, SK, UK) and several plan such initiatives for the near future (HU, IT, LT, LU).

For the time being, the knowledge basis which should be available to support guidance policy- and decision-making still appears weak and rather fragmented. Efforts to bridge policy and practice on basis of related research and better knowledge of the various requirements needs to be strengthened and intensified even though many countries have carried out respective evaluations, studies and reviews of guidance and counselling services in order to establish a more solid and updated basis for guidance policy formulation and implementation (DE, DK, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, MT, NO, SE, SI, SK, UK).

A recent Cedefop study, *From policy to practice – a systemic change to lifelong guidance in Europe* (2008) (printed copy available) also reflects the progress made in the Member States (plus Norway) in the years 2004-2007 and confirms that many actions for developing coherent guidance systems have already been taken with good results in many cases.

Despite the positive developments the report also stresses that continuous commitment is needed. The different rationale and sometimes conflicting interpretations of career guidance in the education and labour market sectors remains a challenge in the construction of consistent and all encompassing guidance systems. National lifelong guidance policy forums are considered as an appropriate instrument to bring the different providers and stakeholders together in order to systematically restructure them in the interest of the citizens and with a focus on service provision and results for the clients.



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### **2. Broadening access to guidance**

A major challenge for citizens' access to guidance is that there rarely is a coherent lifelong guidance system, but two parallel and fragmented systems in education and employment. Cross-sectoral, multiprofessional and network-based guidance cooperation is not only a means to clarify responsibilities between education and employment administrations (BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, HU, IS, NO, SE, SI, UK); it should also create new synergies between guidance service providers.

Market oriented guidance services have been modernised and expanded in many countries to cater especially for the needs of adult workers and groups at risk (*low-skilled, unemployed, employed, labour market entrants or leavers, job changers, immigrants, etc.*) (AT, BE, BG, CY, DE, EL, ES, FR, HU, IE, IS, LT, LV, MT, UK + Scotland/Careers Scotland). In some countries, adults in working life are supported by the social partners who provide guidance services to their members (BE, BG, DE, IS, UK).

For example: already in 1997, the UK established the Union Learning Representatives (ULR), whose main task is to engage and support employees to take up learning and training in the workplace, especially those individuals who were disengaged from learning due to a poor school experience or learning barriers.

Hungary has launched a programme called "Step One Step Ahead (SOSA)" for adults with low qualification levels. The main aim of this programme is to increase the educational level, to improve the chance for unemployed to find a job, and to help inactive people to re-enter the labour market. The training is free for participants. Some 15.000 adults have already participated in SOSA.

Many Member States have implemented innovative guidance measures in the context of training programmes and at workplaces to improve transition from education to work (BE, BG, CY, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, FI, IE, IS, IT, NL, SK). Additionally, all countries introduced targeted measures to support people with special needs which facilitate skills development and improve their access to specific guidance services and training programmes.

For example, Iceland has established so-called Lifelong Learning Centres that currently form a nationwide network which mainly offers training, guidance and counselling for low-skilled adults in rural areas. These centres also run training programmes and language courses for immigrants to support their integration into the Icelandic culture and economy.

Cyprus has a scheme for young secondary school-leavers, the unemployed and inactive women. The aim is to effectively meet the training needs of these particular groups and to improve their employability through the acquisition of specialised complementary skills and knowledge. The personalised approach, provided by the Public Employment Services, includes the identification and recording of skills, talents and interests of the participants. Personal action plans are accompanied by continuing information and



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guidance on the available opportunities for training and employment.

Availability and quality of on-line guidance services – including web based career information as well as telephone help-lines - for young but also adult people have been improved in a number of member States (BE, EE, ES, FR, HU, IE, LT, UK).

National occupational databases and classifications of professions have been newly established or are planned in 8 Member States (BE, BG, CZ, FR, HU, NO, RO, SE).

Furthermore, some of these countries (BG, ES, HU, RO) also have started or are planning promotion campaigns for guidance and counselling services to increase awareness of potential users and facilitate access to these services.

**3. Strengthening quality and quality assurance mechanisms**

As in many other areas, defining quality standards and mechanisms for quality assurance is also an issue in the provision of guidance services, whereby it is commonly ascertained that such assurance can be best provided through ensuring high quality of staff.

Guidance counsellors play a central and dominant role in the provision of guidance services. Professionalisation of guidance in educational institutions as well as in employment services thus requires that guidance counsellors are well trained, which concerns initial training as well as continuous training.

Many countries have launched initial and further training programmes for the professional development of guidance counsellors (AT, BG, DE, DK, EL, IS, LT, LV, PT, RO, SK) and in some Member States discussions are presently ongoing on the appropriate means to train and develop high quality staff for guidance services (CY, DE, DK). Lack of trained guidance counsellors remains a problem for some countries (IS, HU).

Quality standards for guidance services have been developed in several countries (AT, CZ, CY, EE, FI, LT, MT), whereby it has been stressed once more, that quality of guidance provision can be best ensured through a sufficient number of qualified guidance counsellors (e.g. ES, NO).

**4. Supporting the acquisition of learning and career management skills**

In the context of training programmes and curricular development for initial training, career choice as well as labour market familiarisation play a major role. Integrating learning with working and practical hands-on experience is seen as an important instrument to facilitate students' education-to-work transitions and is promoted in the majority of Member States (AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EL, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, RO, SK, UK). Some countries have developed career guidance at higher education institutions to systematically support graduates in their career management and to help them entering into the labour market (BG, CY, EL, NL).

Adults, who require guidance support for recognition of non-formal and informal



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learning, for upgrading their skills and qualifications and for actively participating in lifelong learning, have become a policy target in some countries (BE, DK, EL, HU, IS, UK).

France, for example, has successfully implemented a skills assessment scheme (*bilan de compétences*). Today, there are more than 500 specialised French centres distributed nationwide to implement the scheme. All employees have a legal right to a skills assessment every five years which guides them in their professional development.

A universal right for skills assessment has been established for the 45 years old or older employees (since 2005), which is also accessible by handicapped people regardless of their age (since 2008).

In addition, gender-specific/sensitive education and career choice has been a focus in some countries (AT, CY, DE, EL, FI).

For example, the Cyprus public employment services offer a personalised approach (incl. an individual action plan) for women, who require special support for labour market participation.

Cedefop's report on *Career development at work - a review of career guidance to support people in employment* (2008) (printed copy available here for the conference participants) explores the range of career guidance provision that supports workforce development across the EU-25 Member States. The main conclusions emerging from the research has been the demand to create an effective strategy for providing career development support directed to adults and the employed; to increase the role of intermediary organisations in the provision of such support; and to empower individuals in successful career management.

There is a wide range of intermediary organisations offering some forms of career guidance alongside other activities. Among them, trade unions have become important actors. As mentioned earlier, the UK Union learning representatives, who are elected or appointed according to the rules of their union, are a good example of this development. In many cases the trade unions rely on volunteers for successful delivery of face-to-face information, guidance and advisory services.

The *Career development at work* report highlights that advice and guidance is critical prior to the engagement of trade union members in learning or career development. The credibility of trade union members and the trust of their colleagues, who provide these services, is an important success factor.

### **5. Strengthening structures for policy and system development**

In terms of strengthening structures for guidance policy coordination, the Member States reported on positive developments in this area in the DGVT and ReferNet questionnaires. However, a more complete and profound analysis of the most current state of play in setting up national policy coordination mechanisms and strategic partnerships is given in the Cedefop handbook on *Establishing and developing national lifelong guidance policy*



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*forums - A manual for policy-makers and stakeholders* (2008) (printed copy available here for the conference participants).

National guidance forums or similar policy coordination mechanisms have been identified in at least 24 Member States (AT, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LV, LT, LU, MT, NO, PL, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK). Most countries who do not yet have a national guidance forum are in the process of setting one up. These national lifelong guidance policy forums have been established to improve policy- and decision-making, to build leadership capacity, to manage reform and innovation processes and to rethink demanding cross-sectoral cooperation arrangements.

As probably many of you know, national lifelong guidance policy forums belong to the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network which is a platform for European and national level policy action. Cedefop along with the Member States and some other international or European institutions cooperate with this recently established network on lifelong guidance policy matters. The next speaker, Dr Raimo Vuorinen, will explain in more details, what the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) actually is and what it does.

**Challenges for European and national policy- and decision-makers**

Ladies and gentlemen, the availability of guidance services of high quality and accessible to all is an important part of the new European instruments in vocational education and training. It was my intention to reflect that many initiatives have been taken and that important progress has been achieved in almost all Member States. However, more remains to be done and we need to continue our efforts to realise comprehensive guidance services throughout the European Union.

In 2009, Cedefop will launch a new study which will follow the development and identify the most recent policy and strategy developments and successful initiatives on lifelong guidance in the Member States, analyse their effect in order to provide a basis for future cooperation and knowledge sharing between Member States.

We further intend to examine how young people's social inclusion and smooth education-to-work transition in the Member States can be best supported by different guidance measures (study 2009-2010).

The impact of changing structures and business activities as well as changes in the population of enterprises impacts directly on local job markets. Support to the many small- and medium-sized enterprises by providing work-based career guidance for skills and career development of their staff members is an important feature of guidance services. Developing a new learning culture at the workplace where guidance is well integrated will help companies remain competitive on the local market and in the global economy. To this end, Cedefop will examine the role that guidance can play in designing strategies to support workers who are at risk of becoming redundant due to restructuring (study 2009).



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The national lifelong guidance policy forums are expected to coordinate the design, management and evaluation of guidance services in the Member States. In addition to that, they could also have a leading role in integrating a systemic guidance approach to validation of non-formal and informal learning, accreditation of prior experiences and learning, transparency of qualifications (EQF), learning outcomes (incl. curricula development, ECVET), future skill needs, adult learning and age management, international mobility, intercultural dialogue and EU enlargement.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am convinced that the conclusions of this conference will contribute importantly to the further development of guidance and will help to prioritise the most urgent issues and to focus future policies. A new resolution on lifelong guidance will strengthen the mandate that lifelong guidance already has in European education, training and employment policies and strategies.

Let me remind in conclusion that guidance is not only important for social inclusion and facilitating transition but also for finding career paths which are in line with individual capacities and interests, reflecting labour market demands at the same time and thus will lead to a more satisfactory and economically productive life of our citizens.

Thank you for your attention and patience.



# Evolution and Added Value of The European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network

Raimo Vuorinen, Ph.D. Coordinator of the ELGPN  
Finnish Institute for Educational Research,  
University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Key note speech at the French 200(8 EU Presidency Conference entitled:

**Career Transitions and Lifelong Guidance:  
Building a European Response**

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# Concerns of the citizens

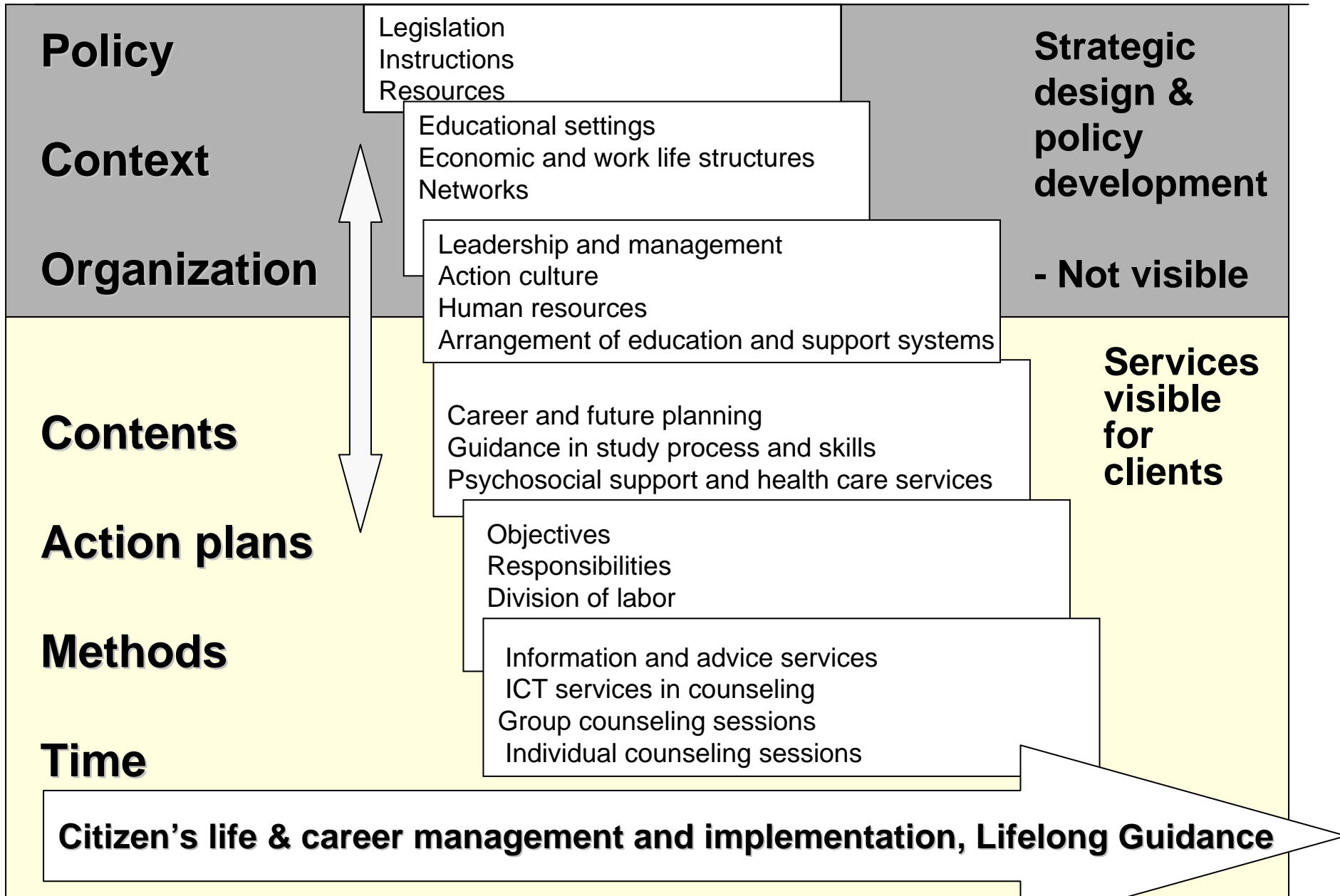
- Access?
- Career management skills?
- Is their voice been heard?
- Content and quality of the services?
- Co-operation between service providers?

# Concerns of policy makers?

- What is the investment in guidance?
- What are the outcomes of guidance?
- What are the impacts of different service delivery modes?
- What is the data we are collecting to identify the evidence for certain outcomes?
- Use of existing funding available in a cost effective manner?

# Strategic design of guidance practise & policy

(Kasurinen 2006, Vuorinen, Kasurinen & Sampson 2006)



# Long Term Objectives of the ELGPN



- Support for policy development
- Policy sharing
- Information gathering
- Policy analysis and research
- Use of reference tools
- Exploiting project outcomes
- Strengthening representative structures

# Added value of the ELGPN



- A tool for European co-operation
- Enhancement of national solutions to meet national challenges.
- ELGPN is a conclusion to meet the challenges the policy makers meet in implementing the Lisbon strategies and the tools supporting the strategy (e.g. EQF and ECVET)

# ELGPN thematic actions

## 2009-2010



- **Career management skills**
  - (Council Resolution on Lifelong Guidance 2004, 2008?)
- **Access, including APEL**
  - (Council Resolution on Lifelong Guidance 2008? Council Conclusions on Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning 2004; EU Common Reference Tools)
- **Co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms in guidance policy and systems development**
  - (Council Resolution on Lifelong Guidance 2004, 2008?; EU Common Reference Tools)
- **Quality assurance/Evidence-base for policy and systems development**
  - (Council Resolution on Lifelong Guidance 2004, 2008?; EU Common Reference Tools)

Thank you!

For further information, please contact:

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www: <http://elgpn.eu/>  
Skype: vuorai



✓ Nom: BENABDALLAH

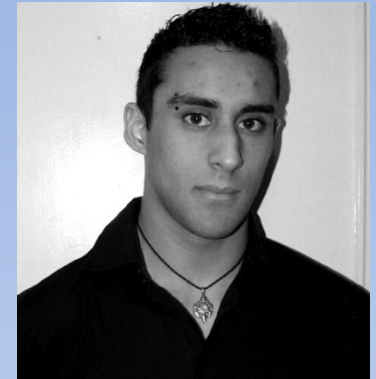
✓ Prénom : Mohamed

✓ Age : 20 ans

✓ Études : actuellement en classe préparatoire

✓ Élu lycéen: Conseil National et Académique de la vie lycéenne

✓ Travail étudiant : Agent de Nettoyage industriel



# LE PARCOURS D'UN ELEVE DE 20 ans...

**STAGE de  
DECOUVERTE**  
Classe : **4ieme**

Entrée en **1ere Techno  
option Génie  
Mécanique** :  
Orientation par le conseil  
de classe en fonction des  
choix de l'élève

Obtention du  
**Brevet de  
technicien  
supérieur (BTS)**  
Entrée en **C.P.G.E  
Spéciale ATS**

2002

2003

2004

2006

2008

Obtention du **BREVET  
des Collèges**  
Entrée en **seconde**,  
choix de détermination:  
**I.S.I.** : initiation aux  
sciences de l'ingénieur  
**I.S.P.** : Informatique et  
systèmes de production

Obtention du  
**BACCALAUREAT** :  
Passage en **BTS  
Mécanique et  
Automatismes  
industriels**

■ Choix  
réalisés

■ Diplômes  
Obtenues

# A chaque choix une réflexion...

2002	2003	2004	2006	2008
4 <sup>ième</sup> : Choix d'un stage en entreprise.	3 <sup>ième</sup> : Choix des enseignements de détermination en seconde.	2 <sup>nde</sup> : Choix du baccalauréat que l'on souhaite passer.	Terminale : Passage dans l'enseignement supérieur.	Fin BTS: Choix d'une poursuite d'étude.
Admiration devant le métier de pharmacien	-Influence des parents -Consultation d'un conseiller d'orientation -Intervention des professeurs	-Image de la section scientifique -Influence des parents -Décision du Conseil de classe	-Aucune inquiétude -Peur de changement d'établissement -Besoins d'accompagnement	-Refusé en école d'ingénieur par alternance -Soucis financier -Appréhension vis à vis de l'université
Trop ennuyeux comme métier pour moi	Choix des parents d'une orientation en milieu industriel (+ d'ouverture d'emploi)	Volonté d'aller en <u>S</u> refusée par le conseil de classe. Passage en STI option GM	Mon choix accepté: passage en BTS M.A.I.	Une année difficile s'annonce...

# Les établissements fréquentés:

- 6<sup>ième</sup> 5<sup>ième</sup> : Collège Gabriel Pierné Ste Marie au Chênes.
- 4<sup>ième</sup> 3<sup>ième</sup> : Collège privé de L'Assomption Briey
- 2<sup>nd</sup> jusqu'au BTS : Lycée Louis Vincent Metz
- Actuellement en **Classe préparatoire aux Grandes Écoles** : Lycée Pierre Mendès France, Épinal

# Les éléments qui m'ont permis de continuer dans une filière choisie par la famille

- Épanouissement dans le cadre des mes fonctions de représentant des élèves.
- Travail d'étudiant d'été et du week-end
- L'équipe d'encadrement de l'établissement qui a toujours su me remotiver : du personnel d'entretien jusqu'à la vie scolaire.

# Bilan:

## mon orientation est passée par:

- La famille (choix du domaine industriel...)
- Les expériences professionnelles ( stages, discussions avec des professionnels...)
- Les enseignants ( Conseil de classe...)
- Le contexte financier ( accès aux écoles privées, possibilités de se déplacer...)
- Les méthodes d'enseignement (poursuite en BTS dans le « cocon » du lycée...)