

REVISTA de
PEDAGOGIE



JOURNAL of
PEDAGOGY

<http://revped.ise.ro>

Print ISSN 0034-8678; Online ISSN: 2559 - 639X

INNOVATION IN CAREER GUIDANCE: INTERNATIONAL TRENDS AND CASE STUDIES

INOVAȚIE ÎN CONSILIEREA ȘI ORIENTAREA CARIEREI: TENDINȚE
INTERNAȚIONALE ȘI STUDII DE CAZ

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Journal of Pedagogy, 2021 (2), 135 - 154

The online version of this article can be found at: <https://revped.ise.ro/en/rp-2021-2/>



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Published by:

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UNITATEA DE CERCETARE ÎN EDUCAȚIE**

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INNOVATION IN CAREER GUIDANCE: INTERNATIONAL TRENDS AND CASE STUDIES

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Abstract

This paper is a summary of a report on innovative examples of policies, practices and research at international level, from the European Union, and from selected

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partner countries (Kazakhstan, Turkey and Ukraine) of the European Training Foundation, Turin, Italy. The report examines career guidance through the analysis of policies and practices, identified in the education and training systems as well as in the employment and social policies developed in different countries as a response to global challenges (e.g., advancement of technology, demographic and environmental changes, health crisis). Moreover, this report analyses the megatrends that career guidance currently faces, centering on the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Career Management Skills (CMS) development, cooperation and coordination mechanisms used in career guidance, the parents' role in supporting their children's career choices.

As well, the paper presents innovative examples that focus on how career guidance has evolved in a constantly transforming world and labour market in order to support individuals to learn throughout life and to develop their competences in education, training and labour market contexts.

Keywords: career guidance, career management skills (CMS), cooperation and coordination mechanisms, information and communication technologies (ICT), role of parents.

Rezumat

Acest articol este rezumatul unui raport care prezintă exemple inovative de politici, practici și cercetări din Uniunea Europeană (U.E.), de pe plan internațional și din rile partenere ale Fundației Europene de Formare, Torino, Italia, selectate pentru acest raport (Kazakhstan, Turcia și Ucraina). Raportul examinează consilierea și orientarea carierei prin intermediul analizei unor politici și practici identificate în sistemele de educație și formare profesională, precum și ale unor politici de ocupare a forței de muncă și sociale, ca răspuns la provocările globale (exp. evoluțiile tehnologice, schimbările demografice și de mediu, criza sanitară). În plus, acest raport examinează megatendențele cu care se confruntă în prezent consilierea și orientarea carierei, axându-se pe utilizarea tehnologiilor informatice și de comunicare (TIC), dezvoltarea competențelor de managementul carierei (CMC), mecanismele de cooperare și coordonare utilizate în consilierea și orientarea carierei, rolul părinților în sprijinirea alegerilor de carieră ale copiilor.

De asemenea, articolul prezintă exemple inovative care se focalizează asupra modului în care consilierea și orientarea carierei evoluează într-o lume în care piața muncii care se transformă permanent, astfel încât să sprijine indivizii să învețe pe tot parcursul vieții și să își dezvolte competențele în contexte de educație, formare și ale pieței muncii.

Cuvinte-cheie: competen e de managementul carierei (CMC), consilierea i orientarea carierei, mecanisme de cooperare i coordonare, rolul p rin ilor, tehnologii informatice i de comunicare (TIC).

1. Introduction

The global developments (e.g., advancement of technology, demographic modifications, environmental deterioration, health crisis) have increased the challenges for education, training and the labour market systems. As a whole, this impact can be observed daily in the lives of individuals and in societies. In other words, the way individuals learn and work was influenced by the technological progress. An example of this transformation can be seen in the idea that a job for life is being replaced by constant change and uncertainty. In this sense, individuals are required on the one hand, to become lifelong learners, and on the other hand, they need to acquire new skills, adapt and shape their existing skills, in order to cope with the changes they face.

Therefore, this puts a challenge for more support for the individual and on the career guidance system in general. As a paradox, the career guidance system is already faced with its own challenges and shifts in developing the innovation capacity of career guidance services and achieving a broader impact. Yet, another equally important challenge refers to empowering the individuals to manage their own career paths.

Desk research combined with interviews and field visits were the foundations of the methodological approach of this report. The 48 innovative examples from the European Union and across the world were presented based on the information collected through desk research and analysis by the international expert. The 25 innovative examples from the ETF partner countries (Kazakhstan, Turkey and Ukraine) were selected and presented by three national experts through desk research and interview-based field work (September-November 2019).

2. Education and training systems, employment and social policies in the context of global challenges

Societies have advanced in an increasing globalized world and the resulting new conditions have profoundly influenced the education, training and labour market systems and social policies as well as the individuals and the society as a whole. These new conditions have modified the skills required on the labour market and the ways in which individuals learn and work (European Training Foundation, 2020a).

The low-skilled workers are negatively influenced by these changes as they usually have poor career expectations and are in danger of becoming jobless (Cedefop, 2019). Since early 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic has generated a global health crisis and has increased the need of introducing technological solutions in the education institutions, workplaces and homes.

2.1. Responses to the global challenges in education and training reforms

Investing in education, vocational education and training (VET) and lifelong learning (LLL) represent the preconditions for strong economic development. In other words, enhanced policies are needed to improve the education systems, in order to better prepare youth for entering the labour market through aspects that relate to changes in school curricula, learning climate, teacher's competences, as well as, ensuring the transition between education and the labour market. These include targeted developments of adult learning, upskilling and reskilling. Two contextual aspects are important in this improvement of policies, the aging of the population and migration.

2.2. Responses to the global challenges in employment and social policies

With the aim to foster inclusive and viable long-term development and reduce poverty, specific programmes that promote skills improvement and social inclusion are all the more necessary through the involvement of employers. In addition, proactive strategies and a holistic approach are vital to ensure the cooperation of labour, health, social and psychological services. Our

analysis showed that most of the countries have employment programmes targeted to specific groups containing career information, work choice, search and maintenance, skills-development activities, life-skills activities and support services. Moreover as a result, it is even more important to promote decent jobs for individuals, especially for aging, migrant, refugee and displaced workers.

The predictors that can influence employment policy and career guidance are sustainability in employment policy and adjustment to the climate changes. In this context, certain services, such as public employment services (PES) and PES professionals need to consider the increase of demands for skilled labour force (Borbély-Pecze, 2019). In this sense, the employment services have an important contribution to ensure these demands, while PES counsellors need to comprehend on the one hand, the needs of the clients and on the other hand, they should organise the services so as to support the individual's active involvement in the labour market transitions.

2.3. Career guidance's role – innovation needed

Career guidance approaches and practices should take into account the global challenges as well as aid both public policies and individuals in approaching those. In other words, it is crucial that the career guidance is integrated in various policies and strategies, e.g. lifelong learning (LLL) or social policy. As a consequence, this integration should be reflected in a qualitative career-development programmes provision and access for citizens to the services, while the strategically policy measures should be seen by stakeholders (governments) as ways to address inequalities, to increase the employment rates of high risk groups, as well as to support college and career readiness efforts (Solberg, 2017).

The focus for career-development programmes and services should be on helping individuals to improve their decision-making, proactive and resiliency skills instead of just helping them to make suitable career decisions (Solberg, 2017). In this context, the demand will be more on the role of career guidance, which means it has to adjust promptly and to be malleable to the dynamic demands of the individuals and the labour market.

The practitioners should also be well-qualified to assume their mission of ‘keeping hope alive and affirming the dignity of their clients’ (Herr, 1997). The mission can be assumed by: helping young people in dealing with certain career confusion, working with diverse clients (disadvantaged youth, older workers, migrants, adults involved in new forms of work, etc.), implementing an individualised service provision, developing the sustainability approach, developing the transversal skills of the beneficiaries (for example, social and emotional skills) or increasingly using the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in career guidance.

Providing career guidance for all categories of beneficiaries is challenging and especially in the case of migrants, ethnic minorities, low-skilled workers, individuals with a low socioeconomic status, NEETs, unemployed adults or people involved in new forms of work (platform work, self-employed, online work). Hence, at the same time, the need to become more diverse and tailored by different career-guidance services is acknowledged. Their aim will be to increase the employability of citizens and link them to the needs of the labour market (Arnkil et al., 2017). Thereby, having access to free career-guidance support is essential for disadvantaged groups.

Offering individualised career-guidance services and taking into consideration the actual life situations of the beneficiaries would help this process even more. In this sense, employers require support to better use the human capital of their staff, as well as to involve them in relevant career development activities (Cedefop, 2011). Employees can receive effective support in their career decisions and personal development through a better coordination between career guidance and the validation of non-formal and informal learning (Cedefop, 2019). Furthermore, a direct involvement of the employees in designing and developing career guidance activities will contribute to offering more effective and tailored services for them.

Another aspect that has become increasingly critical refers to the development of transversal skills (e.g, social and emotional skills and career-management skills), that should be developed through career guidance activities. According to European Commission Joint Research Centre (2019), the jobs that are better remunerated than others are the ones that require a combination of digital and transversal skills.

Employees need effective social awareness skills to collaborate with their colleagues and employers and to deal with various work situations, as well as well-developed self-management skills to take part in lifelong learning activities. In consequence, the focus should be on social and emotional skills expansion: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and decision-making (CASEL, n.d.) through educational and career guidance activities undertaken in various settings (education institutions, public employment services, companies, NGOs, etc.).

Career-management skills (CMS) are considered a category of skills which help an individual to manage his/her career in manners that are individually beneficial. Some of these CMS can be gained through learning, training and work experience in a lifelong process rather than in a single step (e.g. when opting for a career route) (Neary & Dodd, 2016).

“Green guidance” is an innovative approach which concerns the sustainability aspect, as well as aspects related to environmental conscientiousness and responsibility for the ecosystem. In this sense, this kind of work and job choice deal with reducing environment harm and improving awareness of the value of green careers (Plant, 2014).

The Covid-19 pandemic and the following health crisis generated a new context for the field of career-guidance (Hooley, 2020). In this situation, the role of career-guidance counsellors, lies on supporting individuals to identify and implement solutions to this crisis. The clients, in this sense, should have access to other suitable services of mental-health or welfare support, being referred to them by qualified career-guidance professionals. More so, the importance of implementing ICT and artificial intelligence (AI) solutions in the field of career guidance was emphasized by the Covid-19 crisis. The role of digital technology is even more crucial and should be more reflected upon, not as a mere solution that permits the sustainability and continuance of services during such situation (pandemic) for the future of education and career guidance, but also for the personalization of learning and career guidance.

3. Mega-trends in career guidance and innovative examples in the EU and at the international level

This article addresses the following mega-trends in career guidance: the use of ICT in career-guidance systems; career-management skills development; cooperation and coordination mechanisms between key stakeholders in career guidance, and the role of parents in young people's career choices. Furthermore, other emerging trends in the international debate have been identified and presented in the ETF report (2020a, 2020b): social justice as an issue in career guidance; bringing career guidance closer to communities; 'co-constructing' the careers of guidance counsellors; providing evidence and accountability of career-guidance practices; and the co-careering approach.

3.1. Use of ICT in career-guidance systems

The methods of learning about careers in the new contexts requires the use of open data and mobile devices like smartphones, apps, tablets and wearables (e.g., smart watches) (Attwell & Hughes, 2019). In this sense, we can include the use of various ICT devices or apps that are known to most people such as audio or videotape tools (Clark, 2016), chatrooms and instant messaging (Nagel & Anthony, 2016), forums (Carlson-Sabelli, 2016), or more specialist solutions, like massive open online courses (MOOCs) (Bakshi & Goss, 2019). Anthony Watts expressed the idea of the "transformational potential of ICT" (e.g., Watts, 1986, 1996, 2010). ICT is seen in the literature as a tool, when ICT supplements the other tools that can be used in career guidance services; as an alternative, when it replaces ICT with other career-guidance services elements; and, as an agent of change, when ICT fundamentally modifies the structure of the career-guidance services (e.g., Watts, 1996, 2010, as cited in Kettunen, 2017).

Online career information and its sub-types include: digital and online career information systems (CIS), labour-market information (LMI) systems and web-based interactive systems in career guidance. The enabling of digital transformation was exploited and traded by big data via artificial intelligence (AI). Career guidance can use big data for analysing "real time" educational

and labour-market information through online platforms with the purpose of supporting individuals in making career and training decisions. Nevertheless, in career guidance, the use of AI is a new and under-researched topic (Bright, 2015). The use of chatbots brings benefits in career guidance as they respond to repetitive and typical questions, as well as to improving the efficiency of a career-guidance service as they allow the practitioners to concentrate on the in-depth counselling and guidance of their beneficiaries. Other apps can use for instance, GPS abilities of mobile devices to offer local employment and training-opportunity information for clients. As well, they allow more time for the practitioner to deal with detailed aspects of career development. The use of career simulators with enhanced AI supports the development of appropriate risk-taking behavior related to career pathways (e.g., Bright, 2015; *The Real Game*, see Jarvis & Keeley, 2003).

Offering effective distance career guidance and employment interventions and helping the beneficiaries to search for labour-market information (LMI) require innovative change of career-guidance approaches and practices as well as the transformation of the professional identity of career-guidance practitioners through relevant training and professional support (Bimrose & Brown, 2019).

3.2. Career-management skills

The importance of career-management skills (CMS) development for citizens was brought up through two European Union Guidance Resolutions of the Council of the European Union (2004, 2008). CMS refer to “a range of competences which provide structured ways for individuals and groups to gather, analyse, synthesise and organise self, educational and occupational information, as well as the skills to make and implement decisions and transitions” (ELGPN, 2012). Another important document, European Key Competences for Lifelong Learning framework (European Council, 2018) introduced other key concepts such as ‘personal, social and learning to learn competence’, defined as ‘the ability to reflect upon oneself, effectively manage time and information, work with others in a constructive way, remain resilient and manage one’s own learning and career’. This key competence

contains components related to career-management skills. In this sense, countries are requested to identify what career management skills are the most important in their context and thus, integrate them into the education system and skills-development policies (ICCDPP, 2019).

The curriculum model is one of the most relevant modalities to teach career-management skills. CMS should be encompassed in school curricula at all education levels (primary, secondary, postsecondary, VET, higher education). The development of instruments for assessing CMS should also be undertaken simultaneously with the elaboration of a national CMS framework (ELGPN, 2015).

3.3. Cooperation and coordination mechanisms in career guidance

Across the world and in different countries, institutions in charge of career guidance, service providers and employers are requested to find better ways to work together effectively. The Council Guidance Resolution (2008), through Priority area 4, recommended an increasing of the coordination and cooperation among various national, regional and local stakeholders. The support of guidance policy cooperation in education and employment sectors between the Member States was ensured in the period 2007-2015 by the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). This EU-wide collaboration contributed to legislative and strategic measures, as well as to the establishment of national guidance policy forums in many countries.

The activity of the ELGPN is continued by CareersNet, Cedefop's network for lifelong guidance and career development, established in 2017, with the aim to provide access to harmonised, comparable evidence of relevant practices in countries, to advocate their transfer and adjustment; to facilitate cross-national comparative studies of national systems and initiatives; and to support countries in their national policy development (CareersNet Cedefop, n.d.).

Euroguidance is a European network of national resource and information centres for lifelong guidance. It encourages among others, cooperation among different stakeholders in lifelong guidance and education on the one hand, as well as offers support to the national and international networking of lifelong

guidance practitioners, on the other hand (Euroguidance, n.d.). The International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy (ICCDPP) organizes international symposia as means to develop mechanisms to carry out the communication between career-guidance policy and practice.

3.4. The parents' role in young people's career choices

The engagement of parents in career guidance activities is an important topic which needs to be more researched. A Dutch study (Warps, 2013, as cited in Oomen, 2019) showed that, even in one-off, information-centred sessions, the involvement of parents in career education and guidance, can contribute to the growth of study success of Dutch students in the first year of higher education. Nevertheless, other evidence (Barnes et al., 2020) revealed that parental participation in career-guidance activities can be more aspirational than in a systematised or mandated pattern. In this sense, some countries have built specific policies for involving parents in the career decision-making of young people, but this implies a broader strategy, more often. These broad strategies refer to the aim of improving educational outcomes, preventing drop-out, supporting socially disadvantaged children, etc.

It is important for policy makers and practitioners to acknowledge the role of career-guidance in informal provisions, all the more when shaping or restructuring formal career-guidance services, especially when it is delivered by peers, the family (mostly parents) and by representatives of the broader community (relatives, friends, private tutors, authorities, people seen as successful models, etc.), where the concerned individuals live (Zelloth, 2009).

3.5. Examples of initiatives illustrating the mega-trends in career guidance

Below is a table that briefly presents selected initiatives for the four mega-trends (ICT, CMS, cooperation and coordination, role of parents), based on information regarding their impact, while the ETF report includes a total number of 43 innovative international initiatives and 5 other emerging approaches with detailed descriptions.

Table no. 1. Examples of initiatives illustrating the mega-trends in career guidance

Type of initiative	Name	Country	Key features
Digital communication apps	eGuidance (eVejledning)	Denmark	It supports career counselling delivery by practitioners using digital communication means. It comprises JobCity and My Competence Portfolio apps.
Competency framework	Careers Management Skills (CMS) Framework	Scotland	It defines and describes the career-management skills under four themes (self-competences, strengths, horizons, networks). It helps the delivery of career-guidance services in different formats.
Integrated service provision/Cooperation-coordination	One-Stop-Shop Guidance Centres (Ohjaamo)	Finland	Private, public and third-sector service providers come together in one centre to help youth into work.
Programme in schools/ Role of parents	Bridging the dialogue between parents and children for career counselling and guidance	Pakistan	It aims to support parents in guiding their children in career education by offering activities for parents in schools (e.g. responding to questionnaires, taking part in dialogues and participating in workshops, etc.).

4. Innovative examples from selected countries: evidence of international trends and areas for improvement

In this section, we present a synthesis of the innovative ideas and examples from Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Turkey in relation to the international trends in career guidance and areas for improvement. Detailed descriptions of the innovative practices in career guidance, selected from many countries across

the world are included in the European Training Foundation report (ETF, 2020b).

4.1. Kazakhstan

At the national level, through the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP) and the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), the governance of the career-guidance system is being ensured. Career guidance is put in practice by local government, PES (employment centres) and secondary schools at the regional and local levels. TVET organisations and universities are the supply side of education providers. The National Chamber of Entrepreneurs 'Atameken' (NCE) and its Regional Chambers of Entrepreneurs (RCE) represent the employers and labour-market actors. Information and access to local businesses, entrepreneurs and their workforce requirements are offered by NCE and RCEs.

Kazakhstan actively uses ICT such as web-based interactive systems, as well as big data in public service, education, employment and career-guidance activities. Regarding the digital ecosystem and teaching digital skills, especially in remote and rural areas of the country, there is a lot of work to be done to emphasise these topics, while the government is actively dealing with these challenges. The programme 'Digital Kazakhstan' was approved by the government of Kazakhstan and it is being implemented in 2018-2022.

The career management skills are acknowledged by employers, educational organisations and employment services as crucial to sustainable employment and employability. The career guidance practitioners and policy makers recognize the need of enhancement and streamlining of the coordination mechanisms in career-guidance. The role of parents, families and peers in making career choices is highlighted by career-guidance practitioners and policy makers, with the lack of a systemic informal career-guidance practice. Parents are engaged on an ad-hoc or urgent basis or when career-guidance activities require transmitting test outcomes that demand special attention or when parents themselves are actively interested in the process of career guidance.

4.2. Ukraine

The Ministry of Economy and the State Employment Service Centres, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Social Policy, NGOs, employer associations and private services are involved in the provision of career-guidance services. A Memorandum for Collaboration has been signed in 2019 to consolidate the efforts of all the related stakeholders for creating an effective system of public career guidance in Ukraine. Since 2019, under the initiative of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, youth centres have been established across the country.

The selected innovative practices illustrate the stakeholders' readiness for the further improvement of the career-guidance system. The ICT tools support the Ukrainian jobseekers to identify appropriate career options. The E-tool SmartJob provides motivating video courses, webinars, video-counselling and video CV builder for improving soft skills and facilitating a job search process.

Career Hub Ukraine regularly launches career information booklets and career lessons (Career Maps), organizes educational and career projects and competitions, develops methodologies for career counselling for young people in secondary schools, VET schools and universities to support building national strategies and action plans for youth.

A successful partnership of business, state and educational sectors for finding solutions for youth unemployment was initiated by the Ukrainian Pact for Youth-2020 through the National Action Plan, National Conferences and Forums. It involved representatives of international and local businesses, provided workplaces, career mentoring and cooperation programmes for young Ukrainians.

The City of Professions is a mobile career-oriented event which takes place yearly with the participation of children and their parents to learn about the world of occupations. Family Career Tree is another popular educational project for school children that brings a better understanding of family roots and is very important for career self-determination.

4.3. Turkey

The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and the Turkish Employment Agency (SKUR) affiliated to the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Family (MLSSF) offer most of the career-guidance services in various contexts: universities, the private sector, trade unions and employer associations. All these institutions have signed a Memorandum of Understanding which represents a foundation for the National Career Guidance Forum. Turkey's National Development Plans contain articles and sections on lifelong guidance for all age levels (Cedefop, 2021). Educational, career and personal/ social guidance services are integrated in guidance and psychological counselling services in MoNE. In addition, in Turkey's 'Skills Vision 2020' road map, information guidance, counselling and work-based learning are acknowledged. Their contribution is highlighted in creating a socially cohesive, knowledge-based economy, reducing regional disparities and creating a proactive, entrepreneurial labour force in which young people and women can entirely take part. MoNE released its "2023 Education Vision" paper in November 2018 (Ministry of National Education Turkey, 2018), which introduces consistent revisions in the school curricula and in the system of guidance and counselling. These changes aim to empower the young people for the changing demands of the world of work of 2023. SKUR undertakes activities in schools and provides vocational training to unemployed people on employability skills: <https://esube.iskur.gov.tr/kurs/kursOnAir.aspx?ProgrammeTur-1>

Turkey is aware of the importance of ICT tools needed for individuals to access educational/training, labour-market and career information. Schools are establishing career offices to support the students, starting with the 9th grade for better self-understanding, self-exploration and awareness to build a career profile based on values, competences and interests. An important role in the socialisation process and in the children's development is played by the nuclear and extended families.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

The career guidance systems need to be context specific and the innovative examples included in the ETF report should stimulate reflection and offer

inspiration for practitioners, decision makers and researchers. Research plays an important role to offer evidence-based information about the impact, as well as career-guidance service effectiveness. This is why decision makers should reflect and implement changes on these matters. Cooperation and collaboration at policy and practice level, a shift from support for making career and/or education choices at transition points towards enabling individuals to manage their own education and careers, a multi-channel approach to delivery, availability of quality labour-market information (LMI) for the use of individuals in their career development and by professionals in guidance provision, as well as professionalism and quality assurance of career-service provision are just some of the key features overall for having an adequate understanding of career guidance for supporting individuals in the context of the 21st-century labour market and society (ETF, 2020a).

Future lessons that can be learned from this report refer to how career guidance could reflect the need to take into account a wider context of reflection from an economical, employment, social, youth, education and training-policy objectives. Nevertheless, for innovation and effective governance in career-guidance services to occur the following are needed: on the one hand, coherence and efficient partnerships among all the involved organisations and, on the other hand, adequate repartition of resources.

Modern infrastructure for developing and implementing career-guidance services by using different technology (e.g. career information systems, labour market information systems, web-based interactive systems, or integrating social media, apps and chatbots into career-guidance provision), requires decision makers to acknowledge the importance of technology and innovation for career-guidance in general.

NOTES

This article is a summary version of the report:
European Training Foundation (ETF) (2020a). International trends and innovation in career guidance. Volume I. Thematic chapters:
https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2020-11/innovation_in_career_guidance_vol._1.pdf

European Training Foundation (ETF) (2020b). International trends and innovation in career guidance. Volume II. Country case studies:
https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2020-11/innovation_in_career_guidance_vol._2_0.pdf

Contribution

The manuscript was drafted by Prof. Fusun Akkok and finalised by Angela Andrei with the contribution of Florian Kadletz, Hanna Voronina and Almira Zakiyeva (in alphabetical order). They are all the authors of the European Training Foundation (ETF) report (2020a, 2020b), mentioned above.

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