Professionalisation of Career Guidance in Europe: Challenges and Ways Forward

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Structure

- Historical review of European-level developments in the career guidance field: NICE as one of three complementary European networks
- Challenges to role of career professionals (e.g. recently in UK): importance of NICE’s work
- Cognate professions: need to attend to career development of careers professionals
European Vision

‘To substitute for age-old rivalries the merging of essential interests; to create, by establishing an economic Community, the basis for a broader and deeper community among peoples long divided by bloody conflicts; and to lay the foundations for institutions which will give direction to a destiny henceforward shared’.

Preamble to European Coal and Steel Community Treaty (1951)
EU Initiatives:
Foundations 1957-92

– Some actions within vocational training
  (no powers in education)
– Comparative policy-oriented surveys
  (precursors of 2004 OECD review)
– Transnational action programmes

- Extension of powers to cover education (1992)
- Single European Market (1992): focus on mobility
- Establishment of Euroguidance Network
- Studies of occupational profiles of vocational counsellors (CEDEFOP, 1992; FEDORA, 1998)
EU Initiatives: Elevation (2000 to date)

- Communication on Lifelong Learning (2001)
- Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance (2002-07)
- European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) (2007 to date)
- Council Resolutions (2004; 2008)
- European Training Foundation work in neighbouring countries
- Establishment of NICE
Complementary European Networks

- Practice: Euroguidance
- Policy: ELGPN
- Training/theory/research: NICE
Importance of Links to Public Policy

- Most services are publicly funded
- Access to career guidance as a human right
- A public good as well as a private good:
  - Lubricating the education and training system
  - Lubricating the labour market
  - Promoting social equity and social justice
Turbulence in UK

- Marginalisation under Connexions
- Careers Profession Task Force
  (*Towards a Strong Careers Profession*)
- Establishment of Career Development Institute
- Recent marginalisation under current Coalition Government
Challenges to Professions

- ‘All professions are conspiracies against the laity’ (Shaw)
- Exacerbated by technology and ease of public access to information: reframes the role of professions
Cognate Professions

- Teachers
- Psychologists
- Counsellors
- Human resource professionals
Changing Concept of Career

- **From**: progression up an ordered hierarchy within an organisation or profession
- **To**: lifelong progression in learning and work

- Need to apply this to our career structures too
Career Development of Careers Professionals

- To include career development into and out from the profession, as well as within it

- Cf. UK Careers Profession Task Force concepts of ‘Careers First’ and ‘Careers Last’

- Need also to value paraprofessionals, and provide stepping-stones for them too
Research

- Discipline, or multi-disciplinary field of study?
- Value of comparative cross-national research