
Counselling - Lithuania

1. Current situation resp. reform approaches in the field of vocational guidance and counselling

National policy

The re-establishment of the statehood in Lithuania and the outset of the democratic society development after the breakdown of the Soviet Union revealed the necessity to introduce a new system of vocational guidance and counselling (VGC). In 1998 the Ministry of Education and Science released an order on career guidance which defines the aims of VGC: to enable a person in making a rational (instead of an incidental) choice of profession and to support the active career planning. This should be achieved in cooperation with institutions and stakeholders concerned in the field of general, vocational and higher education, employers and their representative organisations, territorial labour exchange offices as well as with parents and teachers. In 2000 the Law on Vocational Education has been passed which regulates that two ministries will share the tasks of VGC: The Ministry of Education and Science ensures VGC in general education and vocational schools and the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour organises labour market and youth extra curriculum career counselling.

SITUATION AT PRESENT

Meanwhile a number of significant laws, regulations and orders have been passed, but they did not yet create a proper legal environment for an efficiently and coherently functioning VGC system to emerge. Specialists of VGC have not yet been trained. There have been no allocations of budget resources for the development of VGC resp. for a service provider infrastructure. Though, several projects have been developed and applied for funding from the European Social Funds; approvals have not yet been made.

Plans and projects in preparation

- AIKOS (Implementation of an Open System of Information, Counselling and Orientation) aims at creating a unified infrastructure of VGC for youth and adults. The information will be provided by the Information system of the Ministry of Education and Science (on educational institutions, teaching programmes, vocational qualifications, certificates, statistical material) and the Labour Exchange information system (about professions, number of vacant workplaces, number of unemployed).
- Two different types of service providers are envisaged:
 - Vocational information places** will inform people about learning and employment opportunities in the country and abroad.
 - Career designing centres** will prepare and implement prevention, correction and rehabilitation programmes, apply psycho-diagnostic testing, consult on vocational or career purposefulness, suitability, career planning issues.

In order to implement the envisaged VGC service the two ministries and related institutions will have to carry out a number of activities, among others: to cohere all tasks and functions, to improve VGC methodology and to initiate, plan and organize the training of VGC specialists. For this end, universities already perform VGC research.

International mobility:

Lithuania takes part in the European mobility programmes LEONARDO and SOKRATES and after entering the European Union, Lithuania has also joined the EURES and EUROGUIDANCE network as well as the PLOTEUS information system. Though information about learning and working possibilities abroad will be made available to all citizens, the international mobility of skilled workers is not considered to be a priority. There is the fear that people might stay abroad forever. In view of a decreasing population all policies tend to national plans of how to stop people from going abroad.

2. Organizations offering counselling service , on initial training, further education and employment opportunities for the craft sector?

Field	Organization	Kind of counselling service	Way of counselling	special <u>target groups</u>
national labour administration	Ministry of Social Security and Labour:	Plans the activities of territorial labour market training and counseling offices and territorial labour exchanges.		
	Territorial labour market training and counselling offices in the largest cities – Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipeda, Siauliai, Panevezys, Alytus, Ignalina, Naujoji Akmene, Taurage.	<p>The offices coordinate labour market counselling and organisation of vocational training in regions, they</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consult clients on occupations, job opportunities, qualification improvement, requirements to enter higher and VET institutions, etc. implement various programmes on self-knowledge and confidence, enhancement of motivation, psychological rehabilitation, development of communication skills, etc. 	Group actions, information days, seminars, individuals coaching.	Employed; Persons with notice on dismissal; persons taking full time studies; Persons of retirement age
	Lithuanian Labour Exchange; 46 local labour exchange offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identification and assessment of client demands, vocational competencies, work experience. information on occupation possibilities, support in choice and acquisition of occupation; design of employment plan and actions for its implementation; setting clients for vocational education and occupation programmes, independent learning and search for work aiming at: acquisition of occupation, improvement of qualification, maintenance of working skills. 	Interview, group actions, information days, seminars, individuals coaching.	Employed; Persons with notice on dismissal; persons taking full time studies; Persons of retirement age

Field	Organization	Kind of counselling service	Way of counselling	special <u>target groups</u>
School facilities	Republican pedagogical-psychological centre (<i>subordinate to the Ministry of Education and Science</i>) with 8 regional departments in Alytus, Kaunas, Panevėžys, Klaipėda, Tauragė, Utena, Vilnius and 26 territorial psychological-pedagogical offices (subordinate to the municipality administrations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> counsel parents and teachers of learners with specific needs and learning, behaviour, emotional, and communication disorders Psychologists at some pedagogical-psychological service offices provide vocational counselling services. 	Individual coaching	Pupils (with specific needs and learning, behaviour, emotional, and communication disorders)
Associations and organizations of the economy	No counselling service available			
Other organizations	Private placement services	<p>Identification of client psychological characteristics and their rating according to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> relevance to vacant positions, personal potential possibilities <p>Set of tasks (individual programmes) for promising workers' personal and professional development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection, testing and identification of psychological characteristics of candidates for different position - from an executive to a leader. 	Interview, group actions, individuals coaching.	<p>long-term unemployed</p> <p>16-25 year old persons who are starting their working life</p>

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	Some charity organisations (e.g. of the catholic church) are running career counselling centres and offices			Disabled people, Persons after imprisonment; national minorities

3. Possibilities for craftspeople to gain work experience abroad

Mediating the employment of citizens abroad is the exclusive right of the State which shall be implemented by the **Lithuanian Labour Exchange**. At present Lithuanian Labour Exchange implements agreements signed between the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the Government of the **Germany, Sweden, Poland, Ukraine and Russia**. Mediation services provided by the labour exchange are free of charge. It is reliable and legal way of employment abroad.

Network EURES, in Lithuania this implements **Lithuanian Labour Exchange and its offices**. Aim of EURES – inform about international mobility which can be useful for employers and employees, who seeks work abroad. EURES services: to inform, consult, to engage.

Leonardo da Vinci programme, Mobility projects: study visits for trainees in different sectors in EU countries.

4. Information resources for craftsmen/enterprises on training, further education and employment opportunities abroad?

Source of information	Kind of information
National Leonardo da Vinci office www.leonardo.lt	exchange programmes to EU countries
Network EURES (responsible Lithuanian Labour Exchange) http://www.ldb.lt/eures	exchange programmes, job service, placements, further education etc
Lithuanian Labour Exchange http://www.ldb.lt	Placement of Trainees Exchange of Trainees Au-Pair program and placement of students

5. Potential users of the MOBILINT training modules

Kaunas chamber of commerce, industry and crafts itself will use the training modules for its own personnel. We will disseminate the results to the **Association of 5 Lithuanian chambers of commerce, industry and crafts** and encourage the utilization in other chambers.

At present neither a standard nor initial vocational education programme has been prepared for the profession of career counsellor specialist development in Lithuania. Sequential in-service programmes are carried out in the Lithuanian labour market training office.

Master studies for counsellors is currently being developed at the **University Vytautas Magnus of Kaunas**. It is envisaged to include the MOBILINT training modules or parts into the course of trainings for counsellors (48 hours of training) at the **labour market training offices** or to university master studies.