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The Youth Guarantee and Lifelong Guidance



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ELGPN Concept Note No. 4

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Summary

High levels of youth unemployment, under-employment, early school-leaving and social/economic inactivity of young Europeans have developed into a deep and burning issue during the last five years. This provides a strong challenge to the European social values which underpin the European Social Model and cohesion policies. The political leaders of the European Union have accordingly agreed a new European initiative for young people known as the Youth Guarantee Initiative (YGI). From October 2013 and into the first months of 2014 all European Union member states are building or further developing their national Youth Guarantee action plans. Using the open method of co-ordination (OMC) mechanism, the European Commission and member-state representatives (Permanent Representatives Committee of the Council of the European Union) are calling for action at European and also at member-state levels.

This European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) Concept Note is designed to support the national administrations' work in the development and review of their responses to the challenges set by the YGI. The paper contends that successful and sustainable implementation of the Initiative can only be secured through effective integration of lifelong guidance practice into national programmes. Lifelong guidance refers to a range of activities that enables citizens to identify their capacities, competencies and interests and to make career decisions that enable them to manage their own life paths in learning, work and other settings.

The major goal of guidance is to build the career management skills of all citizens – including young people eligible for the YGI. Guidance services can help to prepare young people for opportunities, to support them as they progress through their learning or working experiences, to limit drop-out for example, and then to provide follow-up and post-Initiative support. Guidance can help to tailor programmes to the particular needs and challenges faced by young people who are either classified as NEET (not in education, employment or training) or are vulnerable to such disengagement. It is an integral part of several measures to support young people, such as the reintegration of early school-leavers, measures to foster employability or measures to remove practical or logistical barriers.

The paper collates existing good practices that describe a range of ways in which national governments can integrate their existing lifelong guidance provision with the demands of the YGI. It describes activities that provide focal points for young people so that they know where and how to find support, outreach strategies for those that are not engaging with services, personalised approaches, support into a range of second-chance learning opportunities to improve skills, programmes to support entrepreneurship, targeted and well-designed wage and recruitment subsidies, and programmes that promote and support youth mobility.

Without lifelong guidance, the Youth Guarantee Initiative could merely provide a temporary diversion to keep young people off the streets; with lifelong guidance, it could become their springboard to a better future.

A) What is Lifelong Guidance and how can it be mobilised to achieve the goals of the new European Youth Guarantee Initiative?

The European Youth Guarantee Initiative as a response to persisting high youth unemployment

1. In February 2013, 5,694 million young people between the age of 15 and 24 were unemployed in the 28 member states of the European Union. In some member states, youth unemployment has hit record high levels (e.g. EL, ES, HR, IT, PL); whilst in others, youth unemployment is still at a relatively low level (e.g. AT, DE, DK, NL) (Eurostat, 2013). The economic as well as social costs of youth unemployment are significant. In terms of lost productivity and social welfare payments alone, Eurofound (2012a) estimated that in 2011 the cost of young people's unemployment or inactivity was the equivalent of 1.2% of GDP which equates to an annual loss of €153 billion across the EU. The re-integration into employment of just 10% of these young people would create an annual gain of more than €15 billion. The social and psychological costs are equally significant, though harder to quantify (Hughes & Borbély-Pecze, 2012).
2. In response to the growing problem of the proportions of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), in April 2013 the Permanent Representatives Committee of the Council of the European Union (Coreper) agreed to a recommendation establishing "youth guarantee" schemes. The agreement emphasises the following issues:
 - building up partnership approaches between public and private employment services,
 - employers, social partners and youth representatives;
 - outreach strategies towards young people, especially the most vulnerable ones;
 - support for the integration of young people into the labour market by enhancing skills, encouraging employers to offer young people jobs and promoting labour mobility;
 - assessment and continuous improvement of the schemes; and
 - use of the available EU funds to support the establishment of the schemes.
3. Later in 2013 member states' social affairs and employment ministers agreed to the European Youth Guarantee Initiative (YGI) (EC, 2013). According to the Council Communication, this means that: "All young people under the age of 25¹ who lose their job or do not find work after leaving school should receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within 4 months. Member states should implement the schemes as soon as possible, preferably as from 2014" (EPSCO, 2013). The Council Communication proposes that national YGIs will contain the following building blocks:
 - building up partnership approaches (the national co-ordination body might be the Public Employment Service, which can develop links with necessary partners

¹ MEPs voted on 11 September 2013 to extend the entitlement to young people aged up to 30, and to dedicate funds from YGI/ESF from the final quarter of 2013 onwards.
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20130906IPR18864/html/Youth-unemployment-ensure-good-quality-traineeships-say-MEPs>

- schools, youth organisations, training institutions, private employment services, employers and trade unions);
 - bridging the gap between schools and employment services (including school-based and employment-based guidance services);
 - tailoring the support (using individual action planning);
 - early intervention and activation;
 - supportive labour market measures for labour market integration;
 - mobilising of EU Structural Funds;
 - assessment and continuous improvement of schemes (to maintain and develop the national YGI up to 2020).
4. Intervention in labour markets to address youth unemployment aligns closely with the European Social Model for social justice. The Commission has described this model in terms of values that include democracy and individual rights, free collective bargaining, the market economy, equal opportunities for all, and social protection and solidarity. The model is based on the conviction that “economic progress and social progress are inseparable: competitiveness and solidarity have both been taken into account in building a successful Europe for the future” (CEC, 1994). The Council recommendation on YGI adopted on 22 April 2013 underlines that “investing now in the human capital of young Europeans will deliver long-term benefits and contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic growth.”
 5. Lifelong guidance services provide an infrastructure and expertise to help make the Youth Guarantee Initiative work within the values of the European Social Model. The effective implementation of the YGI should bring together a range of actors to support young people’s integration into the labour market. Its success will lie in the effective co-working of a range of community institutions including schools, guidance organisations, PES, private providers, voluntary groups and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as families and young people themselves. Guidance services provide an interconnection between all these partners and are an essential part of the process of integration of young people into the labour market.
 6. There is already evidence that the Youth Guarantee works, and that it is cost-effective. Impact studies from Finland and Sweden, for example, show strong evidence (ILO, 2013) that young people who get involved in Youth Guarantee programmes find jobs faster than comparable control groups. Similarly, in Austria, 63 per cent of young people who participated in a similar guarantee scheme in 2010 found a job within a year of participation. According to ILO estimates, Youth Guarantees can be implemented at an annual cost of approximately 0.5–1.5 per cent of GDP, based on country conditions and the size of the eligible population (ILO, 2013).
 7. At the high-level Conference on the promotion of youth employment in Europe held in Berlin in July 2013, German Federal Chancellor Merkel delivered a concluding statement which emphasised the need to “build up career guidance structures systematically and extensively, co-ordinating them with school-based career advice services so that school-leavers are in a position to make sound career choices which take account of the labour market context. The availability of career advice from an early stage, i.e. before individuals leave school, can substantially contribute to the accomplishment of the Youth Guarantee”. She also indicated the importance of “providing a comprehensive range of advisory services on labour market

issues for employees and employers” (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, 2013).

8. The EU Labour Ministers and the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion agreed that “...an uncomplicated nationwide counselling service must be accessible in all places and be built up according to similar standards” (Declaration of the EU Labour Ministers, 2013:9).

The role of Lifelong Guidance within Youth Guarantee Initiatives

9. Based on the European definition, lifelong guidance refers to a range of activities that enables citizens of any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are learned and/or used (EC, 2004). They may be variously described as comprising “educational, vocational or career guidance, guidance and counselling, occupational guidance/counselling services, etc.” (EC, 2004). These types of activities are essential to assist young European citizens in developing personal labour market and educational goals and empowering them to be able to act.
10. Guidance is rarely a single event such as a life-changing conversation. Rather it is a series of activities that encourage people to reflect on their own strengths, capabilities and values, to vision a positive future for themselves, and to plan and effect a series of actions that move them towards this vision. Such guidance activities include “information and advice giving, counselling, competence assessment, mentoring, advocacy, teaching decision-making and career management skills” (EC, 2004). These

activities begin in school and continue throughout life. Establishing career management skills require well-established career education during compulsory schooling. This may include developing a career education curriculum, or integrating learning about career within other subject teaching alongside support from guidance professionals outside the schools. Partnership development in local communities can help to build opportunities for young people to learn about work (e.g. summer work, voluntary activities, apprenticeship etc.) and this plays a crucial role to support the delivery of well-established guidance system in the schools.

11. The major goal of guidance is to build the career management skills of all citizens – particularly young people who can then use these skills throughout their lifetime. Career management skills “refer to a whole range of competencies 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” (Sultana, 2009).

Linking YGI with existing guidance infrastructure

12. In some countries (e.g. DK, AT, FI, DE) national guarantees already exist for young citizens. This usually means that national administrations support systems that do not let young people drop out between the school-leaving age and the early years of their work career. For example, in Denmark youth guidance centres are responsible for every 15–17-year-old teenager. The centres have a statutory obligation to develop personal educational plans with each young person up to the age of 18. For young 18–25-year-olds who have not completed and are not attending a youth education

programme, the youth guidance centre has an obligation to provide guidance. In Germany, the federal employment service (BA) set up “Team U25” which is a single-entry-point service based on Social Code II to offer guidance to young people who are both NEET and under the age of 25. In Austria, the national public employment service (AMS) plays a similar role for NEETs. The common element in these solutions is that the first contact between the young people and the authorities starts with a guidance service including a personal interview. This professional exploration process leads to effective intervention. During the interventions, guidance services can continue to maintain a relationship with the young person, which can play a crucial role to prevent drop-out. Finally, guidance is there for follow-up and for after-care services (such as negotiation with employers or helping young lone parents).

13. The elements of Youth Guarantee Initiatives (e.g. apprenticeship, training, internship and job offers) are the subject of strong discussions within each country. They are all (with the possible exception of the new quality job offer) linked with vocational education and training, and so create direct and immediate costs for national governments with no guarantees of immediate positive outcomes. Therefore alongside these types of activities young people should be supported in a number of ways that include building their skills profiles and their knowledge of work, alongside developing their commitment to continuous training, engaging with labour markets, and having a resilient and entrepreneurial approach to their immediate and future employment. Lifelong guidance services can foster these goals through delivering career management skills and providing labour market intelligence to the young people and their families.

14. The job profiles of the employment counsellor and career counsellor were separated at European level (European Commission, 2012b) under the PES to PES (Public Employment Service) Dialogue Forum (2011–13). Such counsellors are key workers to catch the attention of young people who are NEET, conduct a first interview and help the orientation process between the different elements of the Youth Guarantee Initiatives. Employment and youth career counsellors can also act as an agent of change to help young people through transitions (from school to work, work to work, or work to school). The four main tasks of such counsellors are focused on:

- a good-quality offer of employment – requiring communication and interviewing skills, as well as client orientation;
- counselling – requiring counselling, assessment and matching skills, the ability to motivate and inspire clients, stressing resistance, patience and understanding, and the ability to listen non-judgmentally;
- information provision – requiring knowledge of the current labour market situation and trends, communication skills and client orientation;
- administration and monitoring – requiring communication and co-operation skills, and service-specific knowledge (EC, 2012b:6).

15. It is also important to highlight the distinctions between the work of employment counsellors and career counsellors (EC, 2011): the latter often work outside PES and are responsible for long-term social integration and for life-path careering. The important point to note is that a support infrastructure exists within each member state that young people need to be able to access and work with for the Youth Guarantee to succeed.

Tailoring guidance to individual needs

16. Effective guidance is particularly important during the transition from youth to adulthood – generally around the ages of 15 to 24 years. These are the years when young people seek to become accepted as adults in various social institutions including the world of work. A core part of this transition is the search for career options, for a meaningful life and a valued lifestyle (Super, 1980). Through their educational, training and employment choices, they should be encouraged to experience a variety of activities linked to their abilities, skills, attitudes and interests. Life-long guidance activities – built into the Youth Guarantee programmes – could provide a means of helping young people into positive and fulfilling futures on a sustainable basis.
17. Guidance that supports the development of career management skills is particularly important for young people who find themselves disengaged from the labour market. However, the very fact that they are disengaged from learning and employment can make it difficult to reach them and to apply an appropriate response. This is why personalised and individualised guidance is particularly important for the young people whom the Youth Guarantee targets.
18. Young people's experiences of unemployment are not a homogenous group. Their varied and diverse experiences can be categorised both by their attitudes to the labour market and by their socio-economic characteristics. These might include:
 - age (14–16-year-olds who have failed just once in the labour market will experience different challenges to those aged 24 who may have multiple experiences of failure);
 - differing levels of educational attainment, ranging from low skills to attainment at higher education;
 - different levels of vocational experience, perhaps reflecting lack of work experience opportunities within an area;
 - inadequate social and other skills necessary for entry to the workplace;
 - anti-social behaviours (perhaps even with criminal records);
 - caring responsibilities (either as a young parent, or other such responsibilities);
 - gender and ethnicity (each shaping a young person's experience of the learning and labour markets);
 - low-income households;
 - health issues, learning difficulties and disabilities.
19. Whilst causality can not necessarily be assumed, there is evidence that the most common factors influencing the probability of becoming disengaged from the labour market are: low educational attainment, some form of disability, immigration background, difficult family environment, living in a remote area and being in a low-income household (Eurofound, 2012a).
20. Support for young people who experience difficult transitions into the labour market has to recognise that their needs are different, sometimes complex, and – even for a single individual – likely to change over time. Policy responses will therefore need to align a range of different stakeholders to bring different skills, resources and opportunities for young people. Responses also need to recognise that young people's requirements change. Figure 1 provides a summary of the five different types of engagement measures which governments can apply to help overcome unemployment and to implement the Youth Guarantee.
21. Guidance can take place at a number of different points in the young person's pathway

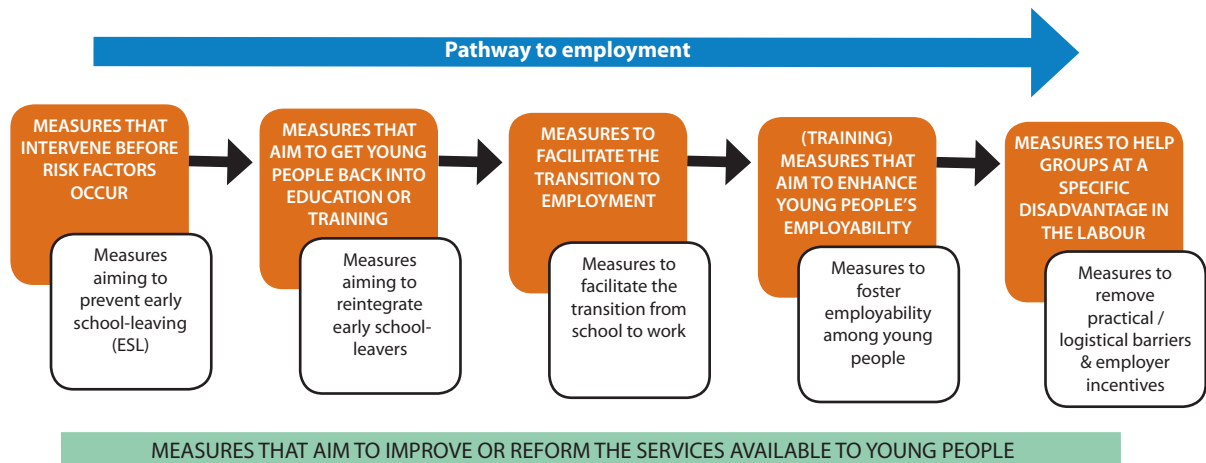


Figure 1: Pathways to employment (Eurofound, 2012b)

© European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)

through the Youth Guarantee Initiative and into employment:

- preventive and outreach work while young people are still engaged, to help those who are on a pathway to unemployment and dis-engagement;
- early intervention (early warning) by the Youth Guarantee, including early engagement with guidance services on entry point, first interview and individual action planning, to clarify personal goals and opportunities, and also make a synthesis between personal interests and skills and labour market opportunities;
- within the elements of the Youth Guarantee Initiative, guidance to sustain personal engagement and support personal career-related outcomes from the Initiative activities;
- facilitating movement between the elements of the Youth Guarantee (such as between work experience and apprenticeships) to support young people to find pathways that align their personal interests with positive labour market outcomes;

- finally, as young people leave the Initiative, helping them with individual career plans and targets to retain them in a non-subsidised placement or in their own small business.

Challenges to effective integration of lifelong guidance with the Youth Guarantee

22. There are a number of challenges for the effective delivery of lifelong guidance to support young people through the Youth Guarantee:

- Fragmentation of some guidance services (for example, those in schools, colleges, VET system, and PES) can make it difficult for young people to transition from one service to another as their circumstances change.
- Services need to have a full knowledge of the young people in their area and what their current labour market activity is. Tracking the activity of young people from school to other activity is vital management information, but problematic where there is no incentive for young people to register with a service unless they see an immediate benefit from doing so.

- There is a need to ensure that employers and those that provide opportunities for young people are known to guidance and to employment services so that they can offer accurate information and appropriate advice to young people and to employers and opportunity providers.
- The challenge to guidance practice is that of negotiating personal ambitions of young people within their local opportunity structure, which in time of economic restraint may present them with limited or apparently unattractive choices.
- There is a need to provide an infrastructure that is responsive to different cohorts of young people and also the changing needs of an individual. For example, an action plan agreed with a young person some months previously may need to be reviewed on an on-going basis as they learn and grow and as the world changes around them.
- A challenge for lifelong guidance practitioners within PES and within the education

system is that they can be pressured to deliver job or other positive outcomes such as voluntary work, apprenticeships etc. in order to hit targets and reduce the overall proportion of young people who are counted as NEET. This is often undertaken within a problematic context where sanctions can be applied to young people's access to economic or other support if they fail to engage.

- Finally, there is the ubiquitous challenge associated with limited resources which prohibit universal access to a developmental process for all young people whilst in school or through their young adult lives.

23. Whilst at least some of these challenges are familiar to all member countries, in the next section we provide examples of how the Youth Guarantee is being implemented within a number of member states and the role of guidance within the emerging schemes.

B) Emerging experiences linking guidance with Youth Guarantee initiatives

24. In a recent policy brief, the International Labour Office (2013) reported on the development of previous Youth Guarantees which were introduced into the Nordic European countries including Sweden (1984), Norway (1993), Denmark (1996) and Finland (1996). More recently, other countries have embarked on similar youth employment programmes, including Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and Poland (ILO, 2013). Meanwhile, other EU countries are considering extending or further developing existing structures and systems to ensure that they meet the Youth Guarantee.

There is therefore already practice that can be shared between networks and across countries.

25. ILO called for action in 2012 against global youth unemployment. The document stated (ILO, 2012, p.5): "A one-sided approach will not be effective. A holistic approach is needed in which both macro and microeconomic policies work in tandem to boost the employability of young people while ensuring that there are productive employment opportunities to absorb the skills and talents of young people." For the way forward, ILO listed activities as

lifelong guidance “...including job-search techniques in school curricula, strengthening career guidance and improving young people’s access to information on career opportunities.”

26. The following section demonstrates some concrete examples of how countries are using life-long guidance systems and services to support their implementation of the Youth Guarantee

Initiative. The categories of measures are drawn from the Commission’s document that accompanied the “Proposal for establishing a Youth Guarantee” and which included examples of Youth Guarantee activities that could be supported by the ESF (European Commission, 2012a). The data have been provided by 17 members of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network.

Measures	Examples of lifelong guidance activities in member countries
Provide focal points for young people	In Denmark, municipally-run youth guidance centres are responsible for contacting all 15–17-year-olds who are not following an individual educational plan. For all such young people, the centres must contact them within 5 days and then provide an educational offer within 30 days. When a young person is leaving compulsory education to enter vocational or upper secondary education, the centre must assess whether they possess the necessary educational, personal and social skills. Guidance is also given to young people up to 25 who are not enrolled in or have not completed upper-secondary or higher education after compulsory school. Guidance practitioners can engage young people in conversations about their futures through a range of outreach activities, working directly with young people in schools or youth centres. In Austria, for example, the public employment service (AMS) offices are the first contact points for young unemployed. The AMS operate outreach-type services where their first interviews with young people help them to build up a detailed risk and needs assessment, provided by youth employment counsellors.
Implement outreach strategies	In Bulgaria and Romania, career guidance centres have been opened recently which act as focal points for guidance activities for young people. In Bulgaria, within the school system, 28 regional career guidance centres have been operating since 2012. In Romania, six Lifelong Learning pilot centres have recently been opened. In Croatia, eight lifelong career guidance centres (called CISOKs) were established in July 2013 outside schools and PES; several more are scheduled for opening in the near future. The aim of establishing CISOKs is to make career guidance services more available to the public. Also, in 2013 Youth Centres were opened in Zagreb and Split; three more are scheduled for opening in major regional offices in 2014, with a planned expansion to all PES regional offices in the subsequent period. In Greece, young people are offered vouchers which can be exchanged for training programmes or for specialised career guidance and support programmes. ICT guidance tools (EOPPEP – Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs) and group counselling activities (OAED – PES) are also developed to enhance the access of different target-groups to career counselling and guidance services. In France, systems have been set up following the law of 24 November 2009 which mean that services can identify and track each young person who has left school or an apprenticeship and who is not registered with a public service. Territorial platforms are organised to get in touch with those young people in order to set up an individual programme to accompany them back to school or to a training path. The law also requires all the territorial actors to rapidly co-ordinate their actions and to use transparent systems to ensure that they support all young people who are older than 16 years and without formal qualifications. In several member countries (DE, AT, HU, HR, CZ), Public Employment Services have their own capacities to deliver employment guidance in the school system. These PES have developed co-operation with schools, and provide career classes for pupils. Other PES tender out these capacities.

Provide personalised guidance for individual action planning on employment and education	In Poland, legislation is being put in place that will provide for the establishment of a “customer assistant”: a professional who will work directly and continuously to assist an unemployed person. This will be accompanied by a legislative requirement that together they will prepare individual action plans after registering with the Labour Office. Working with young unemployed and disengaged people, supporting them to articulate their own visions for their futures and developing an action plan that they own and implement, is a core aspect of guidance practice. In Greece, the existing newly established Interactive Internet Guidance Portal for Adolescents (www.eoppep.gr/teens) and Lifelong Guidance Portal for adults support the career planning of youngsters and other target-groups. In Austria, the AMS plays a central role in the national youth guarantee programme. The PES first must offer a suitable job or apprenticeship to young people. During the first contact the PES clarifies what type services and support would be the best for the individual client. The result is stipulated in a target agreement. If necessary, specialists (internal or external experts) are consulted. Vocational counselling is a very important tool in this context. For low-skilled 15–19-year-olds the PES has comprehensive training and care services. The primary goal for this target-group is to help them to catch-up on their compulsory school education and then complete an apprenticeship at a company. Additional support programmes which incorporate career guidance are available for young people with different needs: Youth Coaching for example is for young people at risk of exclusion and those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Participants may be “coached” for long periods of time and may also return to the coaching programme several times. Youth Coaching is situated at the interface between school and the job market. It is intended for all young people with special needs including those at risk of exclusion, and includes a graduated range of counselling and support services to enable participants to enter suitable training aimed at ensuring sustainable employment integration. Where there are special individual challenges, the service of Youth Coaching could last until the age of 25. In Germany, guidance for youth at risk in the transition from school to work is a Federal initiative called “Educational Chains and Coaching”. Designed to prevent drop-out and early school-leaving, this initiative of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research connects with the existing programmes and tools of the German federal states (Länder). It also combines with the “Coaching for the Transition to Work” programme of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, which aims to support the transition from general into vocational education, as well as to prevent drop-outs in both systems. In Malta, the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) has Youth Employment Advisers who offer individual career guidance to all youth who are registered job-seekers. In addition, ETC Youth Advisers also participate in a number of activities organised by other stakeholders.
Offer early school-leavers and low-skilled young people routes to re-enter education and training or second-chance education programmes, address skills mismatches and improve digital skills	Guidance professionals can assist young people in coming forward to take up second-chance opportunities, and then in placing them into programmes that are the most suitable for them. The “First Job” scheme in Estonia and the “First Workplace” scheme in Latvia both plan to integrate guidance activities into these programmes, which are both linked to wage-subsidy schemes. Sweden has a job guarantee for young people which includes study and career counselling with coaching during job-seeking activities. Young people on the scheme can also participate in work experience, placements, education and training, start-up business grants and, if necessary, an employability rehabilitation programme. In the Netherlands, a €25 million programme is focused on young people who leave vocational education and become unemployed, providing targeted career guidance for them. In Cyprus, early school-leavers between the ages of 15 and 17 have the opportunity to attend a new type of school, “Preparatory Apprenticeship”, for a year, at the end of which they are allowed to take examinations and re-enter mainstream schools (secondary or vocational schools).

Encourage schools and employment services to promote and provide continued guidance on entrepreneurship and self-employment for young people and ensure greater availability of start-up support services	In Hungary, the EU (ESF) co-financed programme (SROP 2.3.6), first announced in 2012, has continued into 2013. The programme supports young people aged 18–35 to become entrepreneurs. It promotes the acquisition and development of entrepreneurial knowledge and skills (financial knowledge, business plan, marketing, legal environment) and secures non-refundable assistance for young entrepreneurs to support business start-up. In Greece, several actions to promote entrepreneurship of young people include: the financial and counselling support of young entrepreneurs, subsidy of the establishment of co-operative companies by young people, and the creation of entrepreneurship hubs which promote entrepreneurship through scholarships, training and seminars.
Use targeted and well-designed wage and recruitment subsidies to encourage employers to provide young people with an apprenticeship or a job placement, particularly for those furthest from the labour market	In Finland, additional resources have been allocated to support young job-seekers working with the PES. These allow for more career counselling opportunities in the employment offices, alongside the operation of the Chance Card which is a wage-subsidy card for lowering an employer's threshold for hiring young people and supporting active job-seeking. Well-established guidance services before the active labour market measures (ALMPs) also improve targeted and tailor-made active measures. The Czech Republic has a programme specifically for young people aged up to 30 without work experience. It begins with counselling and retraining (if necessary) as a prelude to a traineeship which is accompanied with a wage subsidy. The young person continues to receive counselling from the Employment Office, alongside workplace mentoring from the employer. The aim is to retain the young person in the workplace for as long as possible. In Greece, the Greek Manpower Organization (OAED) of the Ministry of Labour within the Active Labour Market Policies and PES provides a wide range of subsidised programmes for employers who offer job positions or professional experience opportunities to unemployed people including young people aged between 16 and 24 years. The programme offers 10,000 five-month full-time jobs to registered unemployed people of different target-groups. As a temporary measure from July 2013 to December 2014, Slovenia has introduced an emergency measure to offer young people under the age of 30 permanent offers of employment in return for exemption for the employer from paying that employee's income-related contributions for 24 months. From September 2013, France has launched the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. This policy is targeted at NEETs aged 18 to 25. Each user will contract with their local office ("Missions Locales") for social and employment inclusion. The young person commits to engage willingly in pathways to employment and training courses. They may be granted financial assistance for the length of the contract. In Italy, the legislative decree n. 76/2013 includes a range of ways to implement the youth guarantee, including professionalising apprenticeships and allocating financial resources to the promotion of internships. The decree provides for the establishment of a dedicated "Mission Board" co-ordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and comprising the Presidents of ISFOL and ITALIALAVORO, the Director-General of INPS, managers of the Directorate-General of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies with expertise in the specific field of intervention, and representatives of the Conference of State-Regions, UPI and one of the two chambers of commerce, industry, artisanship and agriculture.
Promote employment/labour mobility by making young people aware of opportunities that exist in different areas	There is a role for guidance to raise awareness of opportunities that exist in other locations and in other countries, and to support those newly arrived and seeking opportunity. In Germany, for example, the PES has a range of services available nationwide and free of charge that include print and on-line media, and group and individual guidance. As for all citizens the PES is an early contact point for newly arrived young people from different countries. The PES offers a range of services to support their job search and integration.

Enhance mechanisms for supporting young people who drop out from activation schemes and no longer access benefits	Young people who are hard to reach provide a challenge for labour market activation measures. In Norway, there is recognition of this issue, and of the fact that some young people in this situation may not be reliable and may lack motivation to attend interviews and meetings, unless outreach efforts are carried out. Participation in career guidance services or courses has shown positive effects on motivation and planning the next steps. This is then combined in programmes which include activity plans and job match, targeting young unemployed people. The approach is close individual follow up and tailored labour market measures like work practice, labour market training and wage subsidies, which are the usual “work first” approaches for young job-seekers in Norway. Combination of work practice and curricular topics from school has been shown to be an effective model especially for the youngest ones. The schemes are based on close collaborative procedures between the employment service (NAV) and schools, and then on binding agreements at county level. Increasingly the forward direction is concurrent multidisciplinary services, including contributions from mental health and social services. In Germany, a preventive mode is adopted. The Federal Employment Agency (BA) offers all young people vocational and/or study orientation, guidance and placement in training. They work with training companies who can be given allowances to pay people in work experience under certain conditions. Training companies can also receive support for low-performing apprentices where there is a danger that they will not complete the vocational training.
Monitor and evaluate all actions and programmes contributing towards a Youth Guarantee, so that more evidence-based policies and interventions can be developed on the basis of what works, where and why	Lifelong guidance services provide a focus for young people who are vulnerable to labour market disengagement. The services build up comprehensive data about individuals and their local labour markets. This is vital management information which can provide policy-makers and managers with intelligence on how effectively services are working. In Finland, there are clear expectations of the various partners set by the Ministry of Education and Culture and Municipalities, and the Labour Administration. These are in the form of targets such as maximum permitted flow of young people into being unemployed for more than 3 months. Systems are developed around these targets to support monitoring of activity. They are complemented by evaluation research including survey data that provide explanations of the observations.
Promote mutual learning activities at national, regional and local level between all parties	Each country has its own organisational infrastructure and systems and each is developing its own ways of using lifelong guidance to support the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. Guidance services benefit from learning from each other’s practice: networks such as the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) can help to facilitate this exchange of information and ideas. The Network already set up a homepage for country case-studies on guidance. Concept Notes are available on flexicurity and guidance as well as delivering career management skills.
Strengthen the capacities of all stakeholders, including the relevant employment services, involved in designing, implementing and evaluating Youth Guarantee schemes	The Youth Guarantee will only be effective if all stakeholders are committed and actively participate in its realisation in co-operation with each other. Each stakeholder will be required to reflect upon what they do, and how it might be improved. Lifelong guidance services are already committed to such reflection and improvement. In the Netherlands, for example, significant investment is being made to stimulate career guidance in education, with a particular focus on professionalisation of vocational education and training teachers in career guidance. In Germany, too, the quality of guidance is assured through the nationwide introduction of a Guidance Concept in 2009. In Romania since 2005, 42 Centres for Resources and Educational Assistance (CJRAE) have been established as institutions co-ordinating this type of activities at county level. In Austria and Germany, Public Employment Services were nominated as single entry-points to access youth guarantee. The German PES (BA) integrated the European Youth Guarantee objectives across the PES strategy and there is a strong collaborative culture with all stakeholders.

C) Implications for the European Commission and ELGPN member countries

27. The Berlin Declaration of the EU Ministers of Labour and the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (3 July 2013) described the need for a stronger integration policy in Europe and pointed out the key pillars of the Youth Guarantee. It describes three actions:
 - improve qualifications, skills and experience;
 - make it easier to enter the labour market, support young people to access employment and provide adequate advice and guidance;
 - support publicly-promoted employment (p.3).

The declaration also emphasises the role of career entry support programmes for European youth (p.6) and interlinking the classroom and workplace-related component of the national Youth Guarantee programmes (p.8): both issues require good-quality lifelong guidance services in all elements of the national Youth Guarantee Initiatives.
28. Lifelong guidance can be seen as being akin to mortar in masonry, binding together different elements of the Youth Guarantee programmes, and allowing young people to have a coherent range of experiences, to explore their own interests, skills and attitudes, and to build up their own career portfolios.
29. Some countries already have nation-wide Youth Guarantee programmes, whilst others will develop their own national systems in the near future. It is very important to link new YGIs to existing services which already support young people within PES, educational and social services. These include guidance services and activities. This will deliver greater efficiencies for countries by utilising skills and resources that already exist, and ensuring that services become known and sustainable for both young people and their families, and also for training providers and employers.
30. Lifelong guidance services also provide a vital strategic early-warning system for governments and business leaders. They work at the interface between the supply and demand for labour in a local area. They can identify where the labour market is not working and can offer local solutions that can integrate with the objectives of the Youth Guarantee, and thus develop approaches that operate as preventive measures.
31. Lifelong guidance is a valuable component of Youth Guarantee programmes. It can foster short-term objectives (e.g. teach how to find a job) but also long-term goals (e.g. learn to mobilise career management skills). Lifelong guidance helps to achieve personal career aspirations (as a private good) but in addition serves social targets, including labour market and vocational integration (as a public good). Guidance is also a building block of personal learning or working mobility programmes.
32. Different mobility tools for fostering learning quality and geographical mobility within the European Union such as EQAVET, ECTS, EURES and EUROPASS can be mobilised for the purpose of the Youth Guarantee through the development of lifelong guidance activities within national programmes. Guidance can transfer the positive outcomes of these tools to the language of the young people.

33. ELGPN should encourage all member countries to enact the fundamental role that guidance plays in the achievement and sustainable delivery of the Youth Guarantee through:
 - Affirming the role of guidance within all national policies relating to the Youth Guarantee.
 - Requiring guidance to be a component of all relevant services that are commissioned under the Youth Guarantee.
 - Developing national/regional horizontal lifelong guidance policies and through them cross-link different sectoral elements of national Youth Guarantee Initiatives from young people's end-user perspectives.
34. ELGPN should build an evidence base to further develop the ILO's conclusion that young people who get involved in Youth Guarantee programmes find jobs faster and keep employment longer than those who do not. More specifically, an evidence base is needed to indicate the extent to which young people who get involved in Youth Guarantee programmes that embed guidance find jobs faster, and remain in employment longer, than those that do not.
35. The ELGPN Resource Kit (ELGPN, 2012) is available in several European languages. It summarises steps toward the development of national lifelong guidance services and systems. Sections of the Resource Kit link lifelong guidance with access to all (including those who are NEET), and examine co-ordination and co-operation between the sectors and institutions (e.g. school, PES, employers etc.). This knowledge can be mobilised to plan and develop national YGIs. National Youth Guarantee Initiatives must be frameworks for young Europeans to learn career management skills through different elements of the programmes and be able subsequently to construct their own career.
36. Finally, guidance should be embedded more strongly within the Youth Guarantee in the policy development of the three packages for Employment, Rethinking Education and Social Investment among the member states.
37. *Without lifelong guidance, the Youth Guarantee could merely provide a temporary diversion to keep young people off the streets; with lifelong guidance, it could become a springboard to a better future.*

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EUROPEAN LIFELONG GUIDANCE POLICY NETWORK (ELGPN) aims to assist the European Union Member States (and the neighbouring countries eligible for the Lifelong Learning Programme) and the European Commission in developing European co-operation on lifelong guidance in both the education and the employment sectors. The purpose of the Network is to promote co-operation and systems development at member-country level in implementing the priorities identified in EU 2020 strategies and EU Resolutions on Lifelong Guidance (2004; 2008). The Network was established in 2007 by the member-states; the Commission supports its activities under the Lifelong Learning Programme.

THE YOUTH GUARANTEE INITIATIVE is a European policy measure designed to support all young people into sustainable employment. It is a guarantee that all young people under the age of 25 who lose their job, or do not find work after leaving school, receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within 4 months. The Guarantee should be enacted at European level from 2014. Some countries already meet the Youth Guarantee and have built lifelong guidance into their policy measures. This concept note provides the rationale for building career guidance support within each country's policy measures and describes how some countries are already doing this.

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