

# Study Visit to Euroguidance Ireland Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019

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The challenge of providing meaningful Guidance in a Multicultural context  
with reference to the  
'New Skills Agenda'

*Adult Education Guidance, an Irish Service Model*



Lárionad Náisiúnta um Threoir san Oideachas  
National Centre for Guidance in Education



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland





- **Guidance in Ireland is provided in the FET sector through various services, supported by NCGE:** FET / Adult Education Guidance Services, Colleges of Further Education / PLC Programmes, Youthreach / Community Training Centres, Training Centres, Adult and Community Education, Youth Information, Back To Education Initiative and Prison Services.
- **Information and Guidance Services in the Further Education and Training (FET)** sector provide impartial careers and education information, one-to-one guidance and group guidance, which help people to make informed educational, career and life choices.
- **Irish Adult Education Guidance Service Model:** Evolved on 'action research' basis since 2000, informed by ELGPN to develop as professional, client centred, adaptable, flexible and accountable model of Adult Guidance provision with distinct roles, responsibilities, delivery and reporting expectations.

During this study visit we'll look at the **AEGS model of Guidance Delivery** to reflect on the integration of Guidance in to programmes delivered to those adults who are upskilling, reskilling, or among Third-Country Nationals.



**The Adult Educational Guidance Services** set up 2000, (NCGE) lead role in co-ordination of development & support of the AEGI by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) AEGS expanded to 37 locations, housed and locally managed by Education and Training Boards (ETBs)

- AEG services: develop and to deliver professional Guidance services to adults returning to or participating in education opportunities. Pre-entry, entry, ongoing and pre-exit stages; Personal, educational and vocational guidance.
- Working in partnership at local level, developed links with/ to/ and from various agencies meeting a spectrum of guidance needs of the target groups, employing a range of methodologies including information provision, one-to-one guidance, group guidance and outreach provision.
- ETB AEGS staff roles: Guidance Counsellor - Coordinator, Guidance Counsellor and Guidance Information Officer
- Confidential Adult Guidance Management System (AGMS) database monitored and managed by NCGE on behalf of DES and SOLAS, qualitative and quantitative data informs NCGE, SOLAS and DES in planning the provision of guidance to the target groups of the Services. NCGE provides reports to DES and SOLAS arising from the statistics and qualitative information gathered within the AGMS.

Guidance is not 'a numbers' business. AEGS do not 'process' clients and merely progress them from one level of education or work to the next. Adult Educational Guidance involves the whole person, a holistic approach to every issue facing the adult learner in their plans to develop their own skills.



**The AEGI targets individuals and groups that experience particular and acute barriers to participation and are more difficult to engage in the formal learning process.**

**Working to address the Guidance needs of Target Groups, AEGS developed a flexible, dynamic, responsive, quality assured model of Guidance Provision**

- Adults and young people aged over 16 who left school with low or no formal qualifications or low literacy levels
- The unemployed, long-term unemployed and those at risk of becoming long-term unemployed, especially those in the older age groups
- Those not in work but not eligible to be on the Live Register
- Those in the workplace with basic skills needs
- Men and women who have particular experience of barriers to participation including those experiencing rural isolation
- Lone Parents and others with caring responsibilities that may prohibit their participation in full time courses
- Homeless People,
- Substance Misusers,
- Ex-offenders
- People with Disabilities,
- People for whom English is not the mother tongue, who require language and literacy supports
- Former residents of designated education institutions and eligible family members.



### **Member States Part II Europe 2020 Integrated Guidelines Suggest:**

- Ensure every adult the chance to move one step up in their qualification
- Develop systems for recognising acquired competencies
- Focus their efforts particularly on supporting those with low skills and increasing the employability of older workers
- Enhance the training, skills and experience of highly skilled workers, including researchers
- **Improve access to training, strengthen education and career guidance**

**“Guidance is one of the few active labour market measures... have impact on learning (education, vocational training) and labour market outcomes for citizens”...**

# Validation, Recognition of Learning & Experience Exploring the Guidance Role?



*'... establish approaches for identifying and validating non formal and informal learning...Stakeholders should **provide guidance, counselling and information** about these systems and approaches to individuals.' (Cedefop, 2009)*

**VISKA: Visible Skills for Adults, an Erasmus+ project Belgium - Flanders, Iceland, Ireland and Norway:**  
“Employment and Skills: validation of informal and non-formal learning in Education and Training”

- To address the European policy priority of **diminishing skills mismatch** by making knowledge, skills and competences of adults more visible through validation of informal and non-formal learning.
- In particular, VISKA considering the need to make the skills **of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees more visible**, in order to shorten their time to employment, targeted education and training offers and active engagement in society.
- Along with unemployed and low-skilled adults in general, these target groups are currently at a disadvantage in European societies and could greatly benefit from improved access to validation services and from **more holistic validation arrangements**.

**Significant reference to the importance of Guidance throughout the development of RPL, and recommendations in the VISKA Literature Review and Needs Analysis of May 18**

<http://viskaproject.eu/2018/06/viska-literature-review-and-country-needs-analysis/>



'Close to 70 million Europeans struggle with basic reading and writing, calculation, using digital tools in everyday life. Without these skills they are at higher risk of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion. In June 2016, the Commission proposed the setting up of a "Skills Guarantee" to address this challenge. The resulting initiative, now called "Upskilling Pathways" was adopted by the Council on 19 December 2016.'

**EU Skills Profile Tool for Third-Country Nationals:** A EU Skills Profile Tool for Third-Country Nationals to support early identification of skills of asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants was launched at a stakeholders' conference in June 2017.

**July 2018: QQI working with NCGE and (Regional) AEGS Guidance giving feedback on the experience of using the EU Skills Profile Tool...**

- reflecting on the interventions that are core to VISKA
- to develop and extend regional/ national networks and partnerships to include policy makers, social partners and practitioners working on the validation of prior learning,
- extending and adapting tools for use with specific beneficiary groups as well as for enhanced QA
- training and capacity building for guidance counsellors and other front line staff improving access to and awareness of validation services and support.



Established in 1997, the **Expert Group on Future Skills Needs** (EGFSN) plays a key role in identifying current and future skills needs of enterprises, advising the Irish Government on these needs. **SOLAS Skills and Labour Market Research Unit** provides the Group with data, analysis and research and manages the National Skills Database.

- SOLAS National Skills Bulletin ed. December 2018: ‘aims to assist policy formulation in the areas of **employment, education/training, immigration; particularly the sourcing of skills which are in short supply in the Irish and EU labour market from the EEA**’
- Taking a role ‘to inform career guidance advisors, students and other individuals **making career and educational choices**’

### **NCGE FET Guidance Coordinator Role:**

- Supporting guidance provision across FET sector including PLCs, Adult Education Guidance Services, Community Education, Training Centres, CTCs and Youthreach, Prison services and more.
- GC Supports – CPD/ Data Gathering/ Reporting / informing policy & practice
- Working with ETBI, reporting to Director, SOLAS & DES.
- Liaising with stakeholders
- Consider opportunities & challenges of developing new ‘FET Integrated Information & Guidance Strategy’



DES outlined in the National Skills Strategy 2025 that a review of Career Guidance services is required to inform such developments.

Currently the DES Review of Careers Information and Tools is expected to provide recommendations to inform DES, SOLAS, NCGE, ETBI and ETBs and all other national stakeholder discussion on the development of the FET Guidance Strategy

Such a strategy will also require a **focus on the job roles** of all those involved in the delivery of information and guidance services across the sectors. ELGPN Guidelines should inform this process.

*\*ELGPN European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network*

### **Other related Policies & contexts:**

Action Plan 2016-2020: 'Generation Apprenticeship' is a major expansion project opening apprenticeship into a full range of twenty-first century industries and skill sets.

SOLAS co-ordinates the European Globalisation Fund (EGF) programmes on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills and is the designated Intermediate Body for the European Social Fund Programme for Employment, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014 - 2020



“lifelong guidance activities and products may be part of outreach and/or of specialised education and training programmes and part of transition support to learning and work”

AEGS model experience suggests FET Guidance provision demands:

- Communication
- Cooperation & Collaboration
- Guidance Awareness
- Reporting
- Flexibility & Dynamism
- Commitment
- Clarity
- Understanding of Roles, Boundaries and Responsibilities
- Appropriate Qualifications & Training



Part II of the Europe 2020 Integrated Guidelines - European Commission

<http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/Brochure%20Integrated%20Guidelines.pdf>

EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1412>

# Go raibh maith agaibh

## Thank you



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