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iO3

# GIVE - Guidance for Individual Vocations in Europe

iO3: Policy Paper: Educational guidance for new forms of work and new careers

Recommendations for decision-makers



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# 1. Foreword

This Policy Paper was drawn up as part of the Erasmus+ project “GIVE – Guidance for Individual Vocations in Europe”. The Policy Paper aims to help decision-makers in the field of educational guidance to align their strategic decisions to current challenges in the world of work and careers.

Subsection 2.1 briefly outlines the transformation which is currently underway in the world of work and careers, with a particular focus on ‘new forms of work’. The following subsections 2.2 and 2.3 summarise the challenges for educational guidance which this transformation brings, and sketch out selected problem-solving approaches.

Subsection 2.4 lays out the fields of action which we regard as central for decision-makers in helping educational guidance to adapt as effectively as possible to the challenges outlined above.

The final section, Section 3, brings the foregoing sections together and summarises strategies for mastering the educational guidance challenges associated with the new forms of work, as well as the need for further research and development.

## 1.1. What is it about?

*Work “is increasingly marked by intensification, by insecurity, by short-to-temporary-to-zero contracts, by competition and by informal Uber-like arrangements that circumvent labour laws and trade unions. It often pays below-subsistence wages, giving rise to a new class of ‘working poor’. Workplaces have made use of new technologies to install disciplinary and surveillance regimes based on micro-management strategies that shackle with a smile.”* (Hooley, Sultana & Thomsen 2018, 10)

This trenchant quote from prominent pioneers in the European lifelong guidance discourse describes two parallel development trends in the postmodern world of work, with digitisation as a central driver. On the one hand, the use of digital technologies allows for more attention to detail in work processes and employee management, in other words for micromanagement (digitally controlled agile Taylorism, see Flecker 2020, 2). On the other hand, the subjectivisation of work continues to increase.

The loss of career boundaries<sup>1</sup>, and new forms of work such as platform work, solo self-employment, and portfolio work are a crucial issue in the postmodern working world (see Eurofound 2015; OECD 2019a). The spread of careers without boundaries and new forms of work is intensifying a trend towards independence and self-optimisation for modern employees, which has been gaining ground since the 1990s and is referred to as the ‘subjectivisation of work’. Today, many employees are expected to take a great deal of initiative in organising their own work, in order to sell themselves, with their particular skills and life circumstances, on the labour market (see Voß & Pongratz 1998, 131–138).

While new forms of work bring opportunities such as multiple career entry points and flexible working conditions, they also bring with them the challenges involved with self-management and self-promotion. Moreover, a lack of regulation and job security makes new forms of work risky for people with few resources or qualifications, who often end up among the working poor.

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<sup>1</sup> Careers without boundaries: simultaneous work for multiple employers on several projects in quick succession

See e.g.: Hirschi, A. (2018) *Moderne Ansätze zur nachhaltigen Laufbahnförderung*. in: Euroguidance (2018) *Lifelong Guidance in einem dynamischen Arbeitsmarkt: erreichen, befähigen, stärken*. Vienna

Increased subjectivisation is also transforming the concept of a career. While the traditional Fordist model of the employee is based on a concept of career characterised by strictly standardised qualifications and fundamental professional virtues, the post-Fordist, subjectivised employee has “a personalised model of specific skills and experiences, incorporated into a rationalised but individual lifestyle” which constitutes their ‘individual vocation’ (see Voß 2012).

Subjectivisation of work (self-management) and its countertrend of digitally driven ‘agile neo-Taylorism’ (enhanced micromanagement) can be identified as the dominant management trends in the contemporary working world. Both processes bring new forms of work, new careers, and precarious employment to the fore, and shape the contemporary role of careers as templates for identity and systems which generate social order.

The spread of new forms of work, new careers and precarious employment is a challenge for educational guidance. It is no longer enough to support the person seeking guidance while they choose and enter a career, and when they want to change careers. Rather, guidance must empower diverse new target groups to pursue their careers without boundaries and practise their individual vocations, or help these target groups to move into a more stable and secure form of work.

## **1.2. The Erasmus+ Project “GIVE – Guidance for Individual Vocations in Europe”**

The Erasmus+ Project “GIVE – Guidance for Individual Vocations in Europe” (2019-2021) aims to help educational and careers guidance counsellors, as well as relevant decision-makers to master these challenges, by:

- providing information on current trends in work and careers, as well as their implications for power relations between actors on the labour market, for new forms of precarious employment, for new career ‘drivers’, and for demand for qualifications,
- identifying emerging target groups for educational and careers guidance, with their specific support needs (typology),
- collecting or developing points of entry and adequate guidance approaches for these new target groups, and
- providing recommendations for how to tackle challenges on the structural and strategic levels.

This support offering is organised into the following project products: a textbook for self-study, an interactive e-learning offering for education and careers guidance counsellors, and a strategy paper (Policy Paper) for decision-makers.

The project is being implemented by a European consortium consisting of:

- ÖSB Studien und Beratung gemeinnützige GmbH (AT) – coordinator
- bbb Büro für berufliche Bildungsplanung (DE)
- i-smARt Trust reg. (LI)
- Výzkumný ústav práce a sociálních věcí (CZ)

## 2. Educational guidance for new forms of work, careers, and precarious employment: where are decision-makers needed?

### 2.1. Transformations in the world of work and careers

#### 2.1.1. Structural transformation with a focus on 'new forms of work'

In the last few years, it has once more been in vogue to debate the future of work (see OECD 2019b), despite Jeremy Rifkin announcing the "end of work" as early as 1995.

Along with climate change, demographic change, and globalisation, the digital transformation of the working world is a central driver of structural transformation of work and education. Automation of services, Industry 4.0, the use of artificial intelligence (AI), and other factors are changing our way of working (see OECD 2019b). Many tasks are now automated or outsourced, while others are arising for the first time, or changing their function. Human-machine interaction is becoming more and more important in work processes. Traditional working conditions are increasingly being replaced by new forms of work (see OECD 2019a; Eurofound 2015).

A recent Eurofound study (2018) identifies three directions of change or 'vectors' in the digital transformation of the working world:

- **Automation of work:** The replacement of human work by machines has greatly increased its potential scope due to the use of digital technologies and AI.
- **Digitisation of processes:** Sensors and rendering devices are being used to combine processes which were previously purely physical with digital information processes. Digitisation is expanding beyond its core area (IT) into all lines of work.
- **Coordination of labour supply and demand via platforms:** Use of digital networks and platforms to coordinate economic transactions using algorithms.

According to the study, these change vectors are having a particularly profound effect on the following aspects of work:

- **Activities and areas:** The division of labour in the economy and career structure are changing rapidly and significantly.
- The same applies to physical, psychological, and environmental **working conditions**.
- **Terms of employment:** The contractual and social conditions of work, encompassing questions such as stability, development opportunities and remuneration, are generally becoming more flexible, or more disruptive.
- The same is true for **employment relationships** as a relatively institutionalised way for employees to organise their relationships and resolve conflicts (e.g. collective agreements in Austria).

*(For more detail on this, see: Jana Váňová. Module 1 „Trends neuer Formen von Arbeit und Beschäftigung“ in: Haydn F., Götz R. et al. (2021) GIVE Textbook, 16 et seq.)*

The transformation of the world of work sketched out above is particularly striking where traditional tasks completely disappear and are replaced by new ones, and where 'new forms of work' arise.

There is no consistent agreement in the relevant literature as to which forms should be subsumed under the umbrella term of 'new forms of work and employment'. The GIVE project partners agreed on the definition of 'new forms of work' provided by Eurofound (2015):

1. **Employee-Sharing** – where an individual employee is jointly employed by a group of employers, to cover the personnel needs of various companies.
2. **Job-Sharing** – where an employer employs two or more employees who jointly hold a certain job, with two or more part-time jobs combined into one full-time job.
3. **Loan working or temporary work (Interim management)** – where highly qualified experts are employed temporarily on a particular project or to solve a particular problem, as a way of integrating external management capacity into the work organisation. In this paper, however, we use a broader definition of “interim management” (also referred to as “loan working” or “temporary work”), which is dominated by employees with few qualifications.
4. **IT-supported mobile work (also called telework)** – where employees can work from anywhere at any time, supported by modern technologies (information technology, or IT).
5. **Casual work** – where the employment relationship is based on payment of services with a voucher purchased from an authorised organisation, which covers both the employee’s wage and their social security contributions.
6. **Work on a voucher basis** – bei der das Arbeitsverhältnis auf der Bezahlung von Dienstleistungen mit einem Gutschein basiert, der von einer autorisierten Organisation erworben wird und sowohl den Lohn als auch die Sozialversicherungsbeiträge abdeckt.
7. **Portfolio work** – where an independent person works for many clients, and receives small orders from each of them.
8. **Crowd employment** – where an online platform brings employers and employees together, and larger tasks are often divided up and distributed to a ‘virtual cloud’ of employees.
9. **Collaborative employment** – whereby freelancers, self-employed people or microenterprises collaborate in a particular way in order to overcome the limits of their own ‘company size’ and professional isolation.

Some of these forms of work which are labelled as ‘new’ may not seem so new to the informed reader. The selection shown above makes clear that these are ‘atypical, flexible forms of work’, which are demarcated from the ‘standardised, normal working relationship’. ‘New forms of work’ of this kind have a long history, arising especially due to political developments and changes in employment law and technology.

In the 1970s, the fundamental structural transition from an economy characterised by Fordist production and heavy industry to one dominated by the service industry led to a large increase in self-employment. Forms of work such as informal work from home, contract work, casual work, and fixed-term employment became widespread, especially for women.

In the 1980s, this trend was accelerated by deregulation of working hours and forms of employment, and the increased flexibility for employers that came with it. Forms of work such as part-time work, outsourcing of tasks, bogus self-employment, and work as a subcontractor became more and more common.

Finally, the global implementation of information and communication technology from the 1990s onwards gave this development an additional push, by facilitating the global outsourcing of virtual tasks,



and new ways of matching labour supply and demand via virtual platforms. The platform economy had arrived (see Voß & Pongratz 1998, 3–5).

For the purposes of our focus on ‘new forms of work’ within the framework of the GIVE project, we developed a typology of these new forms of work based on the Eurofound definition (2015, see above) with distinguishing features relating primarily to an educational and careers guidance perspective.

### Typology of ‘new forms of work’ for educational and careers guidance

	Designation	Characteristics
Platform work		
T1	High-end crowdworking	Entrepreneurial skills: high (Informal) need for qualifications: high Educational benefits: high Precariousness: mixed Freedom: low Subject matter knowledge: mixed
T2	Crowdworking, microtasks, and regional platform-mediated work	Entrepreneurial skills: mixed Need for qualifications: low Educational benefits: low Precariousness: high Freedom: low Subject matter knowledge: low
Solo self-employed people		
T3	High end: opportunity entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurial skills: high Need for qualifications: high Educational benefits: high Precariousness: low Freedom: high Subject matter knowledge: high
T4	Low end: necessity entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurial skills: high Need for qualifications: low Educational benefits: mixed Precariousness: high Freedom: mixed Subject matter knowledge: low
Loan working		
T5	Loan working (interim management)	Entrepreneurial skills: low Need for qualifications: low Educational benefits: low Precariousness: high Freedom: low Subject matter knowledge: low
Precarious and flexible forms of work (Casual work, work on a voucher basis, portfolio work, variable hours contracts)		
T6	High end: voluntary flexibility (more prestigious jobs)	Entrepreneurial skills: high Need for qualifications: high to low Educational benefits: high to low Precariousness: low Freedom: high Subject matter knowledge: mixed to low
T7	Low end: forced flexibility (more precarious forms)	Entrepreneurial skills: high Need for qualifications: low Educational benefits: low Precariousness: high Freedom: mixed Subject matter knowledge: low

**Legend:**

*High-end: form of work characterised by a high qualifications threshold and high quality*

*Low-end: form of work characterised by a low qualifications threshold and low quality*

*Freedom: freedom to decide one's own hours, workplace, content etc.*

*Subject matter knowledge: proportion of a job requiring professional subject matter knowledge with defined skills and qualifications*

## 2.1.2. Subjectivisation and neo-Taylorism

The spread of careers without boundaries<sup>2</sup> and new forms of work<sup>3, 4</sup> is intensifying a trend towards independence and self-optimisation for modern employees, which has been gaining ground since the 1990s and is referred to as the 'subjectivisation of work'. Based on targets of increasing production by increasing flexibility, agility and intrinsically motivated self-management, many employees are now expected to take a great deal of initiative in organising their own work, in order to sell themselves with their particular skills and life circumstances on the labour market (see Voß & Pongratz 1998, 131–138).

As a new dominant type for the 'subjectivisation of work', Voß and Pongratz define the *entreplooyee*, who can be characterised by three features: "expanded management of the conditions of their own work, increased self-economisation of their work capacities and performance in relation to manufacture and marketing, as well as expanded self-rationalisation, which can be seen among other things in the 'businessification' of even day-to-day lifestyle" (Zentner & Schrader 2010, 256). [For more details, see Rosemarie Klein and Gerhard Reutter in Haydn F., Götz R. et al. (2021) GIVE textbook, 35]

New forms of work provide opportunities such as multiple points of entry to careers, and flexible working conditions. However, a lack of regulation and job security make these forms of work risky for people with few resources and qualifications. A new group of working poor is forming.

Moreover, these forms of work without boundaries can be interpreted as a possible development vector for an altered relationship between suppliers and consumers of human labour. On the one hand, entrepreneurship is relocated into the individual person<sup>5</sup>, and on the other it is taken out of the triangular relationship between employee, company, and customer/consumer (see platform economy, sharing economy).

In parallel to the trend of increasing 'subjectivisation of work', the increased use of digital technologies also brings a new dimension of attention to detail in work processes as well as management of employees (micromanagement) to the fore, which at the extreme leads to a kind of digitally controlled agile Taylorism, or "*McDonaldisation*" (Ritzer 2000) of the company.

Flecker (2020, 2) exemplifies this development using the example of industrialisation of services. Many services from gastronomy to banking have become highly standardised in the last few decades, and converted to self-service. Since then, terms such as "service industrialisation" (Holtgrewe 2015), "neo-Taylorism" (Sproll 2010) and "digital Taylorism" (Butollo et al. 2018) have been doing the rounds. The decomposition of complex tasks, specialisation in individual narrow, circumscribed tasks, and precise

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<sup>2</sup> Careers without borders: simultaneously working for several employers in several projects in quick succession

See e.g.: Hirschi, A. (2018) *Moderne Ansätze zur nachhaltigen Laufbahnförderung*, in: Euroguidance (2018) *Lifelong Guidance in einem dynamischen Arbeitsmarkt: erreichen, befähigen, stärken*. Vienna

<sup>3</sup> McKinsey (2016) points out that 20-30% of the working age population in the US and EU are engaged in "independent work", defined as exhibiting a high degree of autonomy, payment by task and a short-term relationship between worker and customer.

<sup>4</sup> see also Eurofound 2015; OECD 2019a

<sup>5</sup> Self-management – see also the discourse on the "entrepreneurial self" (Bröckling 2007)

rules for performing work are now commonplace in call centres, offices, shops, and other places of work.

Flecker sums up as follows (ibid.): “Alongside higher qualifications and increasing self-organisation, much of the working world is characterised by fewer qualifications and devaluation of work.”

### **2.1.3. Careers, individual vocations, and non-careers**

Increased subjectivisation is also transforming the concept of a career. While the (traditional) Fordist model of the employee is based on a concept of career characterised by strictly standardised qualifications and fundamental professional virtues, the post-Fordist, subjectivised employee has “a personalised model of specific skills and experiences, incorporated into a rationalised but individual lifestyle” which constitutes their ‘individual vocation’ (see Voß 2012).

On the one hand, ‘individual vocations’ involve the removal of temporal, geographical, technical and social boundaries. On the other hand, technical capabilities with standardised qualifications remain important as a basis for practising a career, but only provide maximum advantage in combination with the individualised, cross-field skills of self-marketing and situational adaptability.

The individual vocation “does not mean arbitrariness, formlessness and instability, but rather active design by the individual of combinations of skills, still relating to social framework conditions, and opportunities to apply them professionally” (Voß 2012, 288). Technical professional skills are no longer “ultimately decisive [...], rather [the decisive factor is] how one uses expanded competence conditions to promote oneself with active strategies, and then profitably utilises one’s own potential in the process (working for whoever)” (Voß 2002, 304). [See also: Rosemarie Klein and Gerhard Reutter in: Haydn F., Götz R. et al. (2021) GIVE-textbook, 35]

Alongside the increasing popularity of ‘individual vocations’, we have also seen a resurgence of what we would call the “*non-career*”. New forms of work like microtasks in the platform economy, work on a voucher basis (service cheques per working day), or work contracts with work on demand are strongly reminiscent of early industrial ‘day labourers’, who performed low-valued work on demand with little organised representation. The new levels of technology-driven attention to detail in work processes, paired with the control methods made available for digital micromanagement, is in turn reminiscent of the early high point of industrial mass production, with its all-seeing control mechanisms (see Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*), the difference being that there is no sign of comparable ‘class consciousness among proletarian mass workers’ today.

## **2.2. Orientation: needed now more than ever**

### **2.2.1. Orientation challenges in a working world without borders**

#### **Career and identity: is the partnership breaking up?**

The formation processes and role of professional identities are greatly in flux. Functional job descriptions, characterised by technical performance and progress through education, paired with stable ‘normal biographical’ careers, still play an important role as concepts and templates which shape identity, especially for older people. These ‘identity vessels’ and classification systems, which have their roots in the early modern period, are increasingly becoming less binding in the contemporary second mod-

ern period, however. Supporting and orienting guidelines are becoming more permeable, and the connections which previously shaped identities are becoming looser. This is giving individuals room for manoeuvre, though it is not giving everyone the same amount.

The second modern period is an “ambiguous experience... the disintegration of stabilising dependencies, which in hindsight seem authoritarian, the release from orienting and protecting, but equally prejudicing and restrictive relationships. In short, delivery from a strongly integrated living environment releases the individual into the ambivalence of growing option margins.” (Habermas 1998, 126 et seq.)

For the ‘identity vessel’ of career, this especially means a breaking up of rigid boundaries between sectors, the decoupling of career and earnings, and the replacement of career by consumption habits as the defining factor in one’s individual social position (see Voß 2002 and others).

Proliferating options and diminishing points of orientation intensify the search for offerings with an orienting and stabilising effect.

### Individualised skills and marketing them

‘Subjectivised’ forms of work without boundaries emphasise different challenges for employees than traditional, Fordist forms of work. Using the lens of Pongratz und Voß’s ‘entployee’ (2003, 8), these especially include:

- self-management of the individual’s work and career: individual planning and control of performance, tasks, and career paths, adapting to changing systemic conditions,
- self-marketing of one’s own person on labour markets within and outside the company: identification and display of personal skills, maintaining social networks, promoting one’s personal profile on various online platforms,
- self-rationalisation: orienting one’s own whole personal life plan to the demands of the labour market, removing the boundaries of work in the spatial and temporal dimensions across the whole life cycle

Guidance services which aim to help people in ‘subjectivised forms of work without boundaries’ orient themselves with respect to questions of education and career must also tackle these increased competence requirements and need for orientation in their offering, in order to offer this target group adequate guidance.

## 2.2.2. Proposal for a typology of guidance target groups for new forms of work and careers

As already described under 2.1.2, subjectivised forms of work without boundaries are especially prevalent in the so-called ‘new forms of work’. As shown in 2.1.1, these ‘new forms of work’ are anything but homogenous, and the people working in them are even less so. When trying to create an appropriate orientation offering in educational and careers guidance for this target group, it may be useful to orient oneself using a typology which makes it possible to more precisely distinguish the needs of the relevant target groups.

Within the framework of the GIVE project, we have developed a model of types of people who work in the new forms of work, as target groups for educational guidance. In doing this, we were led by orientation challenges relating to the following subject areas:

- Degree of self-management skills required
- Degree of personal (career) perspective

Possible to gain experience and learning as well as self-actualisation?

- Alternative life plan? = Selection of individual and social risks/consequential costs
- Dequalification, career dead ends, exploitation?
- Socioeconomic background as structuring factor

We have identified and characterised four types (in the GIVE textbook Module 2, point 4, you can find worked out fictional personas for each type):

### Type 1: Performer

Performers are mostly intrinsically motivated and work in new forms of work such as crowdwork in the 'high-end' area (e.g. programmers, and graphic designers) or, for example, as solo self-employed people (opportunity entrepreneurship), make use of the advantages of easy market access, personal flexibility, and development as well as learning incentives, and can handle the challenges of high self-management requirements and uncertain social security well. Performers are mostly highly educated and are not necessarily dependent on income from new forms of work.

### Type 2: Bridge

The bridge type mostly does not choose to work in new forms of work, but rather uses the experience and knowledge that can be gained in them to pursue the goal of secure, permanent employment. This requires that the work offers learning opportunities and is suitable as a reference for the traditional labour market. The required level of education and financial dependence on the new forms of work can vary widely.

### Type 3: Insecure – precariat

For this type, work in new forms of work is clearly aimed at contributing to securing a livelihood. Poorly paid, short-term work such as microtasks, regional on-demand work in the platform economy, low-threshold necessity entrepreneurship, loan working, and on-demand work provide few learning incentives and little usable work experience. Flexibility is compulsory rather than voluntary, and frequent interruptions to work and careers threaten livelihoods. This type usually has few qualifications, but higher basic education with lower labour market demand is certainly not uncommon.

### Type 4: Exploited

This type includes people who are in a poor position in the labour market and are exploited in short-term, non-binding work at low hourly rates. This is particularly common in flexible forms of work such as work on demand, bogus self-employment in the form of sub-subcontractor status, or other forms of work which fall within a grey area under employment law. This especially affects poorly educated people, economic migrants and the long-term unemployed.

All types of exploited people required a high level of self-management competence. The exception is people who work in traditional loan working arrangements, although the inclusion of these arrangements among new forms of work by the project consortium is disputed.

(For a more detailed presentation of the typology, its genesis, and its forms, see Rosemarie Klein and Gerhard Reutter in: Haydn F., Götz R. et al. (2021) GIVE textbook, 40 et seq.)

## 2.3. Does educational guidance need to reinvent itself?

The question therefore presents itself of what answers educational guidance can give to these developments in the world of work, and what role it will play in doing so. In particular, how can or how should guidance respond to the spread of precarious forms of work and “reduced spaces for building social identities” resulting from individual careers or ‘non-careers’?

### 2.3.1. ‘New’ challenges

#### Access to the target group

In our view, the mobilisation of the target group of people who work in new forms of work presents a challenge for educational guidance.

A characteristic of the target group which is important in this respect is the unusually loose connection to traditional systems and structures relating to the labour market and further education. The lack of permanent involvement in company structures eliminates a large driver for acquiring professional qualifications. A significant proportion of the target group is also not connected to social security systems, and therefore to public actors in labour market policy and the qualification services they provide. This is exacerbated by increasingly fluid careers and tasks, which are often difficult to connect to standardised education and training, oriented as the latter is by clearly defined careers and spectra of skills.

The typology of people working in new forms of work sketched out under 2.2.2 gives a sense of the diversity of the target group. Two broad types within the target group which are very difficult to reach can be identified in relation to the mobilisation question. At the upper end of the social spectrum, it seems likely that ‘performers’, with their strong emphasis on individual independence in the broadest sense, will show little interest in and openness to accompanying guidance and support. At the other end of the social spectrum, ‘exploited’ people are on the fringes of society and systems relating to the labour market and education, making this group equally hard to reach. This is especially true because many education offerings are markedly oriented towards the middle class with its specific social and cultural capital (for more detail, see Rosemarie Klein and Gerhard Reutter in: Haydn F., Götz R. et al. (2021) GIVE textbook, Module 2, point 5.2).

An additional challenge in broadening access relates to the change of workplace in forms of work without borders. New forms of work which occur exclusively in virtual workplaces create target groups without spatial boundaries, and therefore raise questions as to who is ‘responsible’ for reaching them.

#### The subject matter of guidance is changing

An array of new topics for educational guidance can be derived from the individual competence challenges faced by people who work in the new forms of work.

‘Self-management’ skills, at least those narrowly relating to careers planning, may already be promoted in the established approach of Career Management Skills (CMS), but this is rather less true for entrepreneurial skills. Admittedly, educational guidance can hardly be expected to impart skills in company law or how to invoice costs, but orientation in the ‘entrepreneurial attitudes’ and task profiles of a job is definitely part of guidance’s core business.

Existing profiling and competence assessment offerings can be linked to the area of 'promoting self-marketing'. Offerings which help workers build and expand social networks or carry out 'self-marketing', using online platforms as a modern matching tool for labour supply and demand are not yet an established component of educational guidance offerings, however.

The same goes for questions of 'self-rationalisation'. Issues such as work-life balance, and coping with and resisting the complete colonisation of a person's life by work, are generally assigned to offerings in life and social guidance rather than educational and careers guidance, but should also in our opinion be seen as central issues relating to personal careers. In line with 'emancipatory' educational guidance approaches, which aim to raise awareness of prevailing structures as the causes of problems, as well as promote social mobilisation and advocacy for change in unjust social structures (see Sultana 2017 18 et seq., and others), educational guidance can take on an important 'new' task here.

On terms of more general content, educational guidance is confronted with two contrasting 'perspective challenges', in line with the dichotomy of types of clients in the new target groups sketched out above, that is, performers vs. precarious/exploited. On the one hand we have target groups which approach their career in a self-determined and open manner, are reluctant to form long-term attachments, and pursue their own individual goals. These groups will need to be informed about the possible risks of a lack of attachment, and the associated lack of prospects in work and career settings which still largely have a fixed, pre-set structure, such as formal qualifications as prerequisites for access to particular careers. On the other hand are groups who feel they have become disconnected in a dynamic, increasingly technologised working world, and have been 'winnowed out'. These groups need support in escaping their precarious working conditions (for more details, see Rosemarie Klein and Gerhard Reutter in: Haydn F., Götz R. et al. (2021) GIVE textbook, Module 2, point 5.4).

### **Making offering structures more flexible**

A central question relating to the structure of the guidance offering is whether offerings should reflect the looser connection of new forms of work to fixed structures and systems relating to the labour market and in education, that is, whether guidance itself should develop more agile, fluid structures.

Up to a point, we regard adaptation to the lack of boundaries in the structures of the labour market and education as necessary, for example expanding virtual offerings untethered from particular places and times.

However, it seems important to us to approach this development with caution, and not to allow the crucial virtues of quality and professionalism to suffer along the way.

## **2.3.2. 'New' answers**

### **How do I reach the 'new target groups'?**

As briefly outlined under 2.3.1, the mobilisation of the target group consisting of people who work in the new forms of work is challenging for educational guidance. To make their offerings accessible to these target groups (see the target group typology sketched out under 2.2), educational guidance providers can either rely on increased awareness-raising work specifically targeted at these groups, or develop proactive, outreach-style offerings, that is a 'go-to-you' structure, instead of a 'come-to-us' structure.

These two options are based on target group analyses which appraise what is known about these groups of customers, allowing us to develop ideas as to where and how these customers can be reached. One possibility both for targeted marketing and for developing outreach-style guidance offerings is working with what are called 'personas'. The idea for producing personas is to get to know the target groups better, and to adapt offerings and communication better to the needs and requirements of this group. (You can find brief persona sketches for the target group types outlined under 2.2.2 in the aforementioned GIVE textbook, Module 2 and Module 3).

It seems clear that some sub-groups among the target group to be addressed spend an increasing amount of time online. Virtual formats for outreach guidance are required here.

### Two selected answers to the challenges sketched out above in terms of the subject matter of guidance

(1) Together with Ronald G. Sultana and Rie Thomsen, Tristram Hooley developed a new guidance approach which takes account of social inequalities<sup>6,7</sup>. This concept is based on five signposts which help counsellors to provide guidance offerings which also contribute to socially just educational guidance.

1) **Promote critical awareness.** Help people to gain a deeper understanding of the world as it is and the situation they find themselves in. This also includes promoting understanding of how the labour market functions and who profits from the current order and particular developments within it, such as the rise of new forms of work.

2) **Address oppression.** To understand various kinds of oppression, it is helpful to see that people's problems are not only down to their behaviour, but can have various causes. Iris Marion Young (2004) delineates five different faces of oppression: exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.

3) **Question what is 'normal'.** Supporting a customer in questioning what is seen as normal can open up new perspectives. There is no normal or 'natural' understanding of career or success. Questioning imposed normality is important, as many people who do not conform to social norms blame themselves for failing to match up to these requirements.

4) **Encourage people to work together.** We do not pursue our careers purely as individuals, but also through our interactions with others. When people work together, they recognise that they face the same challenges, and that they can support each other by collaborating, cooperating, and undertaking joint actions.

5) **Work on different levels.** We shape our careers partly within our own minds, but also within our families, our workplaces, our communities, our national framework conditions, and the political systems we live in. As an educational guidance counsellor, you should feel empowered to intervene on all these levels, in the form of support, advocacy, feedback to the system, and campaigning work. Sometimes people are best supported as individuals, sometimes through systemic change, and often using both approaches at the same time.

(2) Jana Kettunen (2017) developed an approach called 'co-careering' in online communities. Co-careering is defined here as shared expertise and mutually beneficial collaboration on career topics including career and education decisions among community members.

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<sup>6</sup> Bo Klindt Poulsen (2020) The social justice lens: Opening opportunities through experience-based careers guidance

<sup>7</sup> Tristram Hooley (2020) The five signposts to socially just career guidance <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbehZXXhe3I>



While web-based provision of information and educational guidance offerings is already part of day-to-day working life for guidance counsellors, collaboration in educational and training guidance, such as digitally supported co-careering, is still in its infancy in many countries. By providing an interactive digital workspace, guidance counsellors also provide an opportunity to collaborate on questions relating to career and training, and to exchange ideas. Customers who have a shared question or a shared goal can come together to share information and findings with others.

Counsellors need additional skills if they are to effectively promote collaboration among participants. They need the know-how to steer online discussion and collaboration. The aim is to facilitate interesting discussions between individuals and groups, and thereby to make it easier to acquire and exchange knowledge. This task mainly takes the form of group interventions, and is based on the idea of mutual support and shared learning. Each participant can contribute their knowledge and experience to the group. The counsellor also plays the role of moderator, guiding the process in what is largely a background role.

(For a more in-depth look at these issues, see Module 3 in: Haydn F., Götz R. et al. (2021) GIVE textbook)

## **2.4. What can decision-makers do?**

### **2.4.1. Promoting awareness and defining new goals**

If educational and careers guidance is to respond effectively to increasingly volatile labour market systems and education with their 'new' challenges of orientation and precarious employment, we suggest that it will have to re-adjust its objectives. It is not good enough to coordinate supply of qualifications and demand for these qualifications on the labour market. Promoting personal growth and individual development is fine but also not good enough. We additionally need new goals which take account of society at large and its conflicts over resource allocation.

Most current guidance approaches and career choice theories are strongly based on hermeneutic strands in psychology. They focus on the individual and their personal goals. According to this approach, guidance offerings should contribute to personality development, self-formation, self-regulation, and the development of a good personal life plan (see Prilleltensky & Stead 2012, 322).

However, as Bourdieu famously argued (1993), any social intervention can easily become the tool of vested interests if it is not fundamentally shaped by a good understanding of the basic economic, social, and cultural power relationships which determine the context in an area of society.

Miller and Rose (1990) remind us that in a neoliberal context, neoliberal approaches such as help-to-help-oneself, self-management, and empowerment, only promote individuals' self-regulation capacities in order to bind these personal capacities to the economic and social goals of the dominant ideology.

Educational guidance offerings which focus exclusively on the individual and fail to take the socio-economic and cultural context into account tend ultimately to reinforce social systems characterised by problems such as precarious employment, self-exploitation, and systematic inequality, instead of challenging them.

In recent times, various prominent theorists and experts in the international educational guidance community have addressed the 'dilemma' of this psychological approach to educational guidance:

*"Careers education and guidance is a profoundly political process. It operates at the interface between the individual and society, between self and opportunity, between aspiration and realism. It facilitates*

*the allocation of life chances. Within a society in which such life chances are unequally distributed, it faces the issue of whether it serves to reinforce such inequalities or to reduce them.” (Watts 2015, 171)*

*“At its most fully realised career guidance is not simply a vehicle by which individuals might get themselves a piece of the pie, but is rather part of the infrastructure of a new kind of society.” (Hooley 2015, 11)*

To counter the preponderance of individualistic, psychologically-informed methods in both research and practice, Hooley, Sultana and Thomsen (2018) suggest that the guidance discourse should be increasingly informed by other sciences such as critical psychology, sociology and economics, and should concentrate on the contribution of educational guidance to promoting social justice, with both structural and societal barriers being taken into account. They criticise the widely used Lifelong Guidance Definition of the OECD (2004, 19) for failing to take account of contextual factors for guidance such as social structure and embedding in society and culture, and suggest an alternative definition of educational guidance:

*“Career guidance supports individuals and groups to discover more about work, leisure and learning and to consider their place in the world and plan for their futures. Key to this is developing individual and community capacity to analyse and problematise assumptions and power relations, to network and build solidarity and to create new and shared opportunities. It empowers individuals and groups to struggle within the world as it is and to imagine the world as it could be. Career guidance can take a wide range of forms and draws on diverse theoretical traditions. But at its heart it is a purposeful learning opportunity which supports individuals and groups to consider and reconsider work, leisure and learning in the light of new information and experiences and to take both individual and collective action as a result of this.” (Hooley, Sultana, Thomsen 2018, 20)*

In line with this broad conception of educational guidance, we suggest that educational guidance should follow an ‘**emancipatory**’ approach, as sketched out by Sultana (2018, 64 et seq.), so that it can respond effectively to the spread of precarious new forms of work and activities which tend to lead to social isolation. In line with this emancipatory approach, guidance should support customers in questioning the social status quo, instead of helping them to embed themselves within it. Educational guidance should raise customers’ awareness of the structural power relations which lead to a poor position in the labour market, and mobilise them to rebel against it. Educational guidance also acts here as a lobby for social justice.

#### **2.4.2. Guaranteeing structural framework conditions**

In most countries, educational and careers guidance is a classic case of a multi-level governance challenge. On the horizontal level, the relevant services are offered in a wide array of sectors: school, adult education, tertiary education, labour market institutions, advocacy groups, the voluntary sector, the private sector, and beyond. On the vertical axis, it involves all levels of government from EU governance, to national ministries, to regional governments and bodies. Under these circumstances, co-ordinated, coherent political management of the field presents a significant challenge.

This challenge demands good communication between the various levels, sectors and actors involved. Moreover, there is a need to find a good balance when deciding on what level activities should be implemented and decisions made on. Should quality assurance and qualifications for counsellors be centrally managed and standardised across sectors and regions?

Two structural weaknesses which occur regularly should be emphasised here. The first is the historically weak cooperation between actors working in education and the labour market respectively. The second is the strong connection between guidance services and education providers, and the inadequate proportion of guidance providers which are independent of education providers.

New forms of work may make these challenges even greater. The looser connection between these forms of work and structures and systems relating to the labour market and education leads to a lack of representation for these forms of work within those structures and systems. The 'new target groups' risk being overlooked. It also seems that the phenomenon of new forms of work is scattered widely across regions. In particular, larger metropolitan areas may be pioneers in this development. A 'regionalised' approach seems expedient here. At the same time, some forms of work are carried out entirely online, without regard to regional borders. This once again raises the issue of jurisdiction generally being tied to geographic borders, with the implicit risk of non-regional workers being overlooked. Modern, successful multi-level governance systems are required to allow guidance to respond to these challenges.

To sum up, guidance offering structures must be agile enough to respond to the loss of boundaries for 'new target groups', while remaining stable enough in their structural and financial connection to education and labour market systems for this agile and flexible response to new challenges to be possible at all. This requires that an 'educational and careers guidance' profession be established, characterised by the following traits (see also Schiersmann 213, 48 et seq.):

- *institutionalisation*, in the sense of guidance offerings being available everywhere, with a consolidated provider structure,
- *juridification*, in the sense of legal safeguarding and codification of our societal mandate,
- *academisation*, of education and training,
- *scientification*, through secure and differentiated scientific knowledge,
- *professionalisation*, among other things through increasing prevalence of guidance as a main career.

### 2.4.3. Supporting those on the frontline

In our opinion, it is a central duty of steering actors to effectively support those operating on the frontline of guidance. We wish to emphasise two areas in this context: firstly, the area of competence in professional action, and secondly the area of work environment as a prerequisite for professional action.

#### Professionally supporting informed career and education decisions

Professionalism refers to competent professional action, *i.e. professionalism consists in being able to competently execute actions based on secure knowledge and skills shared within the profession*, and therefore relates above all to the individual abilities of counsellors (see Schiersmann 2013, 53 et seq.).

The objective of educational guidance is to support customers in making informed career and education decisions. Supporting informed decisions requires a deep knowledge of current developments in work, careers, and education, as well as mastery of guidance methods appropriate to the relevant target group. In relation to providing guidance to people working in 'new forms of work', this means the following:

- Educational guidance counsellors must be made familiar with the structural development of and trends in the postmodern working world, including subjectivisation and loss of boundaries in work and careers, new forms of work, precarious employment trends and more, going way beyond their

narrower core themes of education and career questions, for example relating to the legal regulation of new forms of work (see OECD 2019b, 23 et seq.). Knowledge is an essential requirement for supporting informed career decisions.

- Educational guidance counsellors must be provided with analytical approaches and tools so that they can observe, appraise, and address selected changes in the fields of work and careers.
- Educational guidance counsellors must be supported in developing appropriate approaches and tools which will allow them to reach and advise the 'new target groups' (see typology under 2.2.2), and to deploy them in their work.

### A stable foundation for work

Working in a field which demands permanent adaptation to challenges in content and methodology requires a high degree of intrinsic motivation. The personal commitment to social welfare of people working in 'social careers' is gleefully exploited; just look at their pay in comparison to other areas of activity.

If decision-makers want to get 'the best' for the complex and demanding task of up-to-date educational and careers guidance, we recommend using 'good work' concepts (such as that submitted by the German unions) and 'workplace innovation' (see among others Frank Pot, Peter Totterdill, Steven Dhondt (2016) Workplace innovation: European policy and theoretical foundation) to orient their discipline.

In the context of adult education in Austria, turning away from volatile project financing is an urgent first step.

Beyond this, we wish to emphasise that development requires resources. Guidance counsellors must get the resources to engage with developments in content and methods alongside their regular guidance role. This is the only way that up-to-date guidance can be reliably offered to everyone.

### 3. Where will this journey lead?

This final section brings the foregoing sections together and summarises strategies for mastering the educational guidance challenges associated with the new forms of work, as well as the need for further research and development.

1. Labour market and employment policy, as well as unions, must pay more attention to the increasing prevalence of the new forms of work. Political decisions are needed to provide direction, so that the central drivers of structural transformation in work and education and the associated massive changes in our way of working are not subject to chance, but instead deliberately designed as a desirable future for work.

In many respects, we have already sketched out where the journey *should* lead. Where it actually *will* lead remains to be decided.

*“We are currently at a historic point where power relations between clients and platform workers can still be changed and the fundamental question remains open of whether active formation can produce a sustainable model of digital work, or whether the exploitative potential of uncontrolled hiring and firing of workers will intensify into a one-sided, disadvantageous model of digital work” (Bertelsmann-Stiftung 2019, 32, emphasis in original)*

What goes for the platform economy here seems also to go for no-longer-so-new forms of work such as loan working, on-demand work, temporary employment, or solo and bogus self-employment, which bring with them more risks than opportunities, because neither their status under employment law nor their integration into the social security system is comparable with that of the normal worker.

With the new forms of work, *“nothing less than the societally protected status of the employee – and thereby the central integration mechanism of modern societies – threatens to be up for negotiation” (Vogel 2019, 53 et seq.).*

Where the journey should lead according to the representatives of neoliberal politics was sketched out by the former executive and current FDP member of the German parliament Thomas Sattelberger:

*“Works councils and trade unions must learn that the vast body of protective rights currently in place was necessary in the era of turbocapitalism, but is increasingly unfit for purpose or even counterproductive in the transition to the digital economy” (See Süddeutsche Zeitung, 04/01/2020).*

So far, the risks associated with the spread of the new forms of work have not received enough attention in labour market and employment policy discussions in European nations, or at least in the countries participating in the GIVE project. Despite the decreasing prevalence of the ‘normal’ employment relationship, this type is still the model which shapes the discourse.

*“If state social services remain bound to the normal employment relationship, some new work relationships will be subject to a high risk of precariousness right from the start.” (Papsdorf 2019, 176)*

This has been strikingly confirmed in the pandemic, with state aid mostly benefitting employees with a regular contract of employment, who already have straightforward ways of accessing the social security system (see Süddeutsche Zeitung, 04/04/2021).

Labour market and employment policy, as well as trade unions, have so far not given enough attention to the new forms of work, despite their increasing prevalence. This setting of the goal and route of the journey is a political decision, but the ‘normal’ routes which have prevailed up to this point will no longer work.

2. As a central accompanying structure for European employees, educational guidance must integrate the new forms of work and the people working in them into their fields of action as new target groups for guidance, and prepare itself professionally for new challenges and tasks. One of its tasks in future will be to actively confront the challenges associated with subjectivisation of society.

The preceding section applies equally to educational guidance in a certain sense. Educational guidance has likewise given too little attention to the new forms of work, and has not been able to reach the new target groups as well as would be desirable, and indeed necessary. The tendency towards loss of boundaries and subjectivisation of work and the development of individual vocations observed in the new forms of work both entail an increased need for guidance. These developments will in future produce *“a systematic general increase in the need for support available to people in all life situations and social areas, to help them master the increased requirements, and therefore also for guidance...”* (Voß 2012). Voß advocates a basic right to guidance, and points out that education was originally a privilege enjoyed only by elites, with a basic right to education arriving only later. Today, guidance and coaching are still the exception for the majority of employees, especially in the new forms of work. He wants to establish a form of guidance which relates closely to day-to-day life and subjectivity, and *“addresses living subjectivity and uses it as a resource more strongly than before, and actively confronts new challenges arising from the subjectivisation of society”* (ibid.).

3. People employed or working in new forms of work need precise guidance and training offerings to help them reduce the risk of precarious employment, and open up alternative career and life plans.

Guidance offered by company advocates such as works or staff councils are often not available to people working in the new forms of work. Loan working or work on demand is found at an above-average rate in companies which do not have a works council, and are not subject to binding wage agreements. External guidance offerings are particularly important in these cases. In any case, there is a need for new, more targeted forms of awareness-raising, to publicise guidance offerings for these jobs.

4. There is a need for study and training offerings for guidance counsellors, to allow them to enhance their professionalism in relation to the new target groups.

Knowledge of new forms of work, their characteristics and effects, the associated challenges for guidance and guidance practice, and possible solutions to these challenges should be integral components of guidance courses and other forms of basic qualification for guidance counsellors, and should be offered as further training options for people who have practical experience of providing guidance.

5. Educational guidance needs an infrastructure which facilitates digital access to target groups, and thus to forms of digital guidance.

To this end, there is a need for technological equipment and opportunities to gain competence in using it professionally.

6. Educational guidance needs offering structures to become more flexible.

There is a need for working conditions which provide the heterogenous target groups in new forms of work with various points of entry. In addition to the traditional ‘come-to-us’ structure of educational guidance, there is a need for formats with a ‘go-to-you’ structure, or outreach-style guidance, in line with the community approach. There is a need for varied search techniques to identify appropriate points of entry, especially for people working in the platform economy.

7. Educational guidance for people in the new forms of work requires networking and cooperation. Guidance counsellors are particularly reliant on cooperation with trade unions when it comes to these new guidance target groups, who do not have traditional employee status, and accordingly lack powerful advocates.

As the new forms of work bring up many questions relating to employment law, some of which have yet to be answered, guidance counsellors need basic knowledge of employment law, and specialist contacts whom they can consult when needed.

8. In the future, educational guidance must be more strongly aligned to the emancipatory model of emancipatory, and therefore also act as a lobby for social justice.

In this way, educational guidance can go beyond the guidance target groups consisting of people working in the new forms of work and contribute to the best possible response to the increasing spread of precarious forms of work, which tend to lead to social isolation.

9. Educational guidance must act (and be able and allowed to act) on a more agile basis.

The historically rather weak cooperation between guidance, education and the labour market must be strengthened, and there is a need for more provider-independent guidance, to see off the danger that the new guidance target groups with their looser connection systems and structures relating to the labour market and education will be overlooked.

10. Guidance practice must be established in a long-term and therefore quantifiable way to achieve sustainable results.

Time-limited, project-style funding is not enough. Guidance counsellors also require resources for necessary professional development on an ongoing basis. The German federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia, for example, has established sustainable and resilient guidance structures over years with the help of the European Social Fund.

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