

Synthesis Report on Quality Standards in Training Vocational Orientation within selected European Countries – Short Version

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Content

1	Executive Summary	2
2	Offer in scope of vocational orientation and activation training measures	3
3	Initiator(s) of vocational orientation and activation training measures	4
4	Setting in which vocational orientation and activation measures are carried out	5
5	Requested initial and further training of trainers.....	6
6	Requested quality certificates from the training institutions	7
7	Other quality programmes in continuous and further group training.....	9
8	Quality situation in vocational orientation and activations training measures .	10
9	Existing quality standards in vocational orientation and activation training measures	11
10	Existing problems on the system and meta level	14
11	Suggestions by experts to improve the situation or solve the problems	16
12	Quality domains developed by the partnership.....	19

1 Executive Summary

The purpose of this synthesis report is to draw together the key themes, existing quality standards and examples of best practice in vocational orientation and careers guidance in selected European countries and to suggest how it may be improved and developed through a common set of quality standards.

The countries participating in the project are: Austria, Bulgaria, England, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. As it can be seen from this list, the partner countries are diverse in their geography, political environment, economic structure and cultural history. At first glance, one thought might be - how can there ever be a common set of standards that would be effective given such diversity? However, one thing that is common and that all countries recognise (to a greater or lesser extent) is that it is essential, if young adults (and in particular the unemployed) are to succeed in developing successful and rewarding careers, that they must be helped and guided in their decision making processes. The approach and structure as to how this is achieved varies according to the country and is related to the interaction between social legislation, economics, infrastructural development and educational policy. The context and method of delivery of advice and guidance services is generally defined by the organisation that is responsible for the commissioning of those services and can be in the form of group or individual coaching and delivered by both public and private institutions.

Most partner countries require trainers to have undertaken a formal qualification in vocational/careers guidance. However, there is also the view that professionals working in this field must also have an appropriate level of 'real world' experience as well as academic qualifications and possess key competencies relating to personal and social communications skills.

Following on from this, those countries that require trainers to be formally qualified also as a rule have some form of certification system(s) in relation to quality.

This is further divided into generic quality management systems (such as the ISO system) and specific measures (such as the Matrix Standards in the U.K.).

Problems that exist in relation to the delivery of effective advice and guidance services include:

- Economic pressures
- Communication and difference in expectations
- Lack of clear standards
- Bureaucracy
- Low participation
- Gap between policy and implementation
- Poor linkages to the labour market
- Poor facilities and access to IT

Legislation in the form of social policy will not be sufficiently targeted to be effective. Action is required at a sectoral and local level to implement change. A common theme is that the 'attitude' toward advice and guidance must evolve so that it is recognised as a central part of an individual's personal development throughout their lives. And that those trainers who deliver these services are adequately trained – both academically and experientially, rewarded appropriately in recognition of their professional competence and is able to deliver those services within a properly resourced environment.

Existing quality standards tend to focus on either the management of, or the service delivery itself at an organisational level. With a lack of clear direction, many organisations and institutions have sought alternative approaches to the question of quality, either through adopting procedures and practices from other countries or developing their own systems.

The development of the QUINORA standards offers the opportunity to address these issues and to produce a training tool that could be used at a sectoral and local level to ensure all guidance professionals are able to implement the standards in a logical and progressive way.

2 Offer in scope of vocational orientation and activation training measures

In some countries like Austria, Germany and Italy vocational training and adult education provision, is divided among a variety of responsible parties, and is fragmented across a number of institutions, public and private ones, including for example the training organisations of the economic chamber, the chamber of labour and the trade unions and local communities/municipalities, who offer vocational orientation in scope of group training and individual coaching and have the main task to help and sustain adults to acquire and obtain further information and to receive specific counseling in order to approach the labour market.

Beside this, regional vocational information centers were established in Austria and Germany. They are run by the Public Employment Service and provide impartial and vocational information and advice on a regional basis.

Whereas in Sweden the National Labour Market Administration (AMV) is the main statutory body, and the local labour offices are working with vocational guidance and activation training at a regional level, in Germany, the Federal Employment Agency (or "BA"), has assumed the major portion of responsibility for initial and further training. In England and Wales the Career guidance "Information, Advice and Guidance" (IAG) is available across a wide range of educational and labour market sectors.

Bulgaria is still searching for ways and methods to achieve effective results in vocational orientation and activation training. Here legislative framework defines what services and measures are to be provided by the various governmental, civic and social agencies.

The Employment Agency is tasked with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy for the implementation of the state policy on developing employment, protection of the labour market, professional information and consulting, professional and motivation training of unemployed and employed persons, as well as for carrying out mediation activity for employment.

3 Initiator(s) of vocational orientation and activation training measures

One of the most significant organisation initiating vocational orientation and activation is the Public Employment Service (PES). In Bulgaria, The National Employment Agency and in Sweden the AMV (the Swedish National Labour Market Administration) are the main initiators of vocational orientation and activation training measures. In Bulgaria the Directorate "Employment bureau" of the Employment Agency organises and finances motivation trainings of unemployed persons. In Germany the BAs provide specialized counseling where the custom is tailored to specific target groups. In Austria the PES offers services on three levels, self-service (self guided), service (personal advice and guidance) and counselling (intensive counselling and advice).

Whereas in Bulgaria the conditions and the order of organising professional orientation, informing and consulting is determined by the regulations for implementation of the Law of Encouragement of Employment, in Italy the National legislation defines the framework and the features of the training programmes. In Italy each center and agency has to apply for the "accreditamento", a kind of credit, which authorizes the institution to operate publicly and to be equally compared with the public organizations instituted by the Region itself.

The centers for professional information of Switzerland, which are similar to the BIZ in Austria and Germany, offer a wide variety of information on different professions and course programmes. These centers are accessible to the public and also offer help in obtaining information. In Switzerland they also offer individualized counseling. In Austria the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture and the Chambers of Commerce offer different vocational and educational information and counselling services, information days and job fairs too.

In Austria adult education organisations, such as the Institute for Economic Development (Wifi), the Vocational Training Institute (bfi), the Adult Education Centres (VHS), church institutions for adult education, the Institute for further Education in Rural Areas often provide their own counselling services, most of them financed by the Public Employment Service (AMS). In England the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) works closely with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and University for Industry (Ufi)/Learndirect to deliver IAG to adults in England and Wales. In Sweden the municipalities, consisting of labour market departments, education departments and social services implement vocational guidance measures as well.

Furthermore, independent agencies such as training organisations, trade union organisations, various kinds of branch organisations and companies are very common in various countries. These agencies can both be assigned and take their own initiative in implementing vocational guidance and activation trainings.

4 Setting in which vocational orientation and activation measures are carried out

In most of the countries vocational orientation and activation measures are carried out in groups or in single coaching. The British Institute of Career Guidance has defined career guidance as activities that take place on an individual or group basis and may be face-face or at a distance, which includes help lines and web based services. They include career information provision, assessment and self-assessment tools, counselling interviews, career education programmes, taster programmes, work search programmes, and transition services. The traditional method of delivering careers guidance in the UK is through the 30-minute personal interview. Specifically trained staff undertakes in Italy group and single counseling. In Germany the local Employment Agencies of the BA determine the target of groups and commission training measures in accordance with the available budget funds.

The more practically oriented the measures are, the smaller the groups. The Swedish group trainings also depend on resources, competence and opportunities.

In Spain there are two different adult learning models: an extensive model, which provides a fairly low volume of training to a large number of workers, and an intensive model, which concentrates more training efforts on a smaller number of people. In order to facilitate employment of young people in search of their first job, there are two kinds of training contracts. The first one, called the Training placement contract, is intended to provide holders of diplomas, university degrees and higher technical qualifications with their first work experience. Students learn the practical side by applying the knowledge and skills acquired in their studies to real working situations. The second, named the Apprenticeship contract is intended for workers aged 17-24 years who are insufficiently qualified for training placement contracts. Their purpose is to enable workers to acquire practical knowledge of a skilled trade or job.

Whereas in Switzerland free and confidential services are offered, in Bulgaria the vocational orientation and activation measures are usually carried out on the premises of the contracted institutions, without having any special resources such as suitable rooms and equipment and there is no standard for the working place for motivation training.

5 Requested initial and further training of trainers

In many countries trainers have to qualify as a vocational orientation trainers or as a career guidance practitioner. For instance in England and Wales qualification is dependent on the successful completion of the "Qualification in Careers Guidance" (QCG) or the "Diploma in Careers Guidance" (DCG) Parts I & II. Both qualifications are awarded by the Institute of Career Guidance (ICG) and qualify the individual for full membership of the ICG. Awarded by 14 UK universities, the QCG is available as a one-year full time or two-year part time course and combines academic study with work-based learning.

Two further qualifications, the National Vocational Qualification Level 3 and Level 4 in Advice & Guidance, are also available.

Whereas in Sweden within the regular school system a university education is required in order to be certified as a study and vocational counsellor, the Public Employment Service (INEM) of Spain works with four types of teacher. The INEM's own teaching staff is permanent INEM staff, and government employees. The Training workshop instructors employ only teachers from outside. The Associated centre teaching staff consists of professional trainers who are attached to the associated centres and the Experts on contract discharge the same functions as INEM's own teaching staff; however, they are not retained on a permanent basis, but for specific training activities.

In Austria, Germany and Bulgaria there is no clear job description for "trainers" and/or "vocational orientation trainers". As far as the formal qualification is concerned, the trainers in Austria have to have completed a trainer/coaching education, respectively an education that includes at least two of the following

contents: basics in group dynamics and group psychology, systemic counselling approaches, conflict management, basics in communication or moderation.

As to the experience of the trainers, they have to prove a minimum two-year working experience in adult education, in the field activation/vocational orientation, and they have to have worked with job seekers and/or unemployed people and be of a minimum age of 25 years old. No definite requirements are officially specified for the trainers in motivation in Bulgaria. However it is an important assessment criteria in the award of contracts to deliver vocational orientation and activation measures, which includes that the qualification of the trainers correspond to the thematic of the course. All the trainers have a University degree and have at least 600 teaching hours practice in the indicated training area and at least 600 teaching hours practice in adult education. But as these statements have to be regarded more as evaluation criteria than as requested qualifications, it is up to the training institutions to form their training teams. Further professional training offered by the Bulgarian Universities and institutions for continuous education is very limited. In comparison German staff are assigned in accordance with the necessary qualifications.

A trainer's formal qualifications are decided according to the nature of the measure, and must be documented by the sponsoring organisation. Additionally, it must be ensured that the implementing organisation arranges for its staff to participate in continuing education measures. The BA itself takes care of a portion of this continuing education.

In Switzerland quite elaborated training offers (especially at university level) exist for those who wish to specialize in the training area of adults. They can undertake that training if they have a federal diploma. This title is obtained by following the modules and while being able to justify practical experience of at least 4 years part-time in the training of the adults.

6 Requested quality certificates from the training institutions

On the whole each country has its own standards and certifications. For instance 41,9% of adult education institutions in Austria use officially acknowledged quality certificates (ISO, EFQM, Upper Austria quality certificate), according to a survey by the ÖIBF.¹ ISO, EFQM and TQM-models have been implemented in a small number of guidance services.

These have in common that they are general conceptual frameworks and that they do not focus on career guidance in particular. In Upper Austria the quality certificate for further and adult education shall ensure a specific quality stan-

¹ ÖIBF (Hg.): Qualitätssicherung und -entwicklung in der österreichischen Erwachsenenbildung (03/36). Vienna Oct. 2004

dard in this region. In Germany certification to DIN ISO is required. Here training organisers must be officially recognised and certified in order to provide further vocational training for adults. Beside this the ArtSet Institute developed the Learner-Oriented Quality model LQW to proof the quality of the learning process of trainings.

The quality cycle starts with a self-evaluation of the training organisation and the creation of a series of principles. Then planning and introduction of improvement measures follows. The development process of the organisation is confirmed by an external evaluation. There are 11 areas concerning the quality development process, which describe indications of the individual elements and components, the minimum of requirements and the possibilities of proof.

ISO quality schemes are also widely used but are not mandatory in Italy. Here institutions, which undertake training, must be accredited under the "accreditamento" system. This credit authorizes the institution to operate publicly. A second level of certification is the "quality certification" ("Certificazione di qualità").

Whereas the "accreditamento" verifies the structural condition of the organization, the "certificazione di qualità" verifies the procedures of the actions implemented within the service. Institutions offering IAG in England and Wales are required to meet certain standards, in particular the Matrix standard, and provide a quality assurance guarantee in order to receive funding and accreditation. Accreditation is obtained through an initial on-site assessment and by continuous quality improvement methods. However, the standard is generic and general in some areas and may not address specific problems that may arise in relation to the quality of the delivery of those services at the point of engagement with the individual or group of participants.

In Switzerland quality management among further and adult education is also quite widespread. Aside from EFQM and ISO certificate the Swiss EduQua certificate exists. It covers six different criteria:

- 1) Offers that satisfy the educational needs of the society and the customers
- 2) Sustainable learning success of the participants
- 3) Transparent description of the offers and the pedagogical mission, customer-oriented, economic
- 4) Efficient and effective service provision
- 5) Dedicated trainers with a professional, methodical and didactic know-how that is up-to-date
- 6) Existence of a quality assurance and development awareness

The certification of the modules, EduQua or other quality certificates, can be obtained from the authorities of certification concerned.

Apart from this in Bulgaria and Sweden no quality certification is necessary for motivation training and vocational guidance. However in Sweden there exist specified requirements that the organizer must answer to at a public purchasing of a guidance course or orientation course amongst other actors.

7 Other quality programmes in continuous and further group training

Aside from the standards by the Public Employment Services two specific quality programmes exist in Austria. The quality working group, a community of interest of the Private Employees Union, has developed the first one. It is a platform for employed and/or self-employed trainers working in the field of education and counselling. The working group is focusing on issues such as quality criteria, training ethics, possibilities for quality assurance. The second quality standard programme was created by the Association of Adult Educations Centers and consists of quality criteria, measures and instruments on quality development and assurance.

The third project on quality in further training is the “Checklist Continuous Training” which offers quality criteria for participants who are unsure of what kind of vocational training measures they should choose.

All these programmes are practically oriented but none of them focus specifically on guidance services.

The Austrian Leonardo da Vinci project MEVOC (Quality Manual for Educational and Vocational Counselling) focuses on quality standards for single coaching. The project is based on a self-evaluation tool for counsellors plus further training offers in the different partner countries.

In Bulgaria statutory procedures are laid down for ensuring quality in vocational education and training and they are obligatory for all VET providers, and are applied both for training of students and adults.

In Italy each organisation or institution has to develop its own instruments and measures which verify the results and there are no official, nationwide, shared, nor mandatory measures which are commonly used within the orientation programmes in order to measure the efficacy of the programmes and therefore of the orientation action. The certifications, which are commonly utilized, refer to a more general and generic system which applies on to the structures and to the procedures implemented by the services, but do not stress and work primarily and specifically on the results (efficiency and effectiveness) of the training and orientation, evaluating specific aspects of the vocational orientation and of the training action.

The development of career guidance in Switzerland has played an important role in the progress in psychotechnical tools. In Switzerland there is no national approach towards quality although the Chief Executives of these organisations, just like the majority of the advisers, express an interest in improving quality.

8 Quality situation in vocational orientation and activations training measures

Quality of training measures is subject to various influencing factors. Quality standards must be made transparent and be established as a market control for the entire system. Quality management, quality standards, and oversight mechanisms are necessary. These mechanisms are published in the descriptions of services in Germany. The quality described here must be implemented and confirmed by the organisation that receives the contract to conduct a measure on behalf of the Public Employment Service. The use of audit groups for training measures, together with ongoing oversight in the contract management process, ensures that training measures are conducted with the requisite quality.

In Austria the Public Employment evaluates the bids to the calls for tender according to certain quality criteria. It prescribes the rules according to who the training course is to be aimed at like what is the target group, what are the pre-requisites a trainer should fulfil, the setting of the course, the infrastructure and so on. Each training institution who submits a bid is to be assessed and given points, depending on how much they meet the requirements of the call for tender. The training institution, which gathers the most points, is going to be offered the contract to carry out of the training measure. Moreover, the Public Employment Service controls the vocational orientation measure randomly.

High standards of vocational counseling measures are applied in England, Wales and Switzerland. Especially England and Wales have enjoyed highly developed, diverse and widely available IAG provision for some time. The 2003 OECD report identified that the country's provision "has a number of very real strengths... particularly when compared to many other OECD countries... quality is taken very seriously." However, despite the successes, raising the profile and standard of IAG was deemed necessary.

Likewise the Swiss vocational, academic and career counseling offers information and counseling of a high standard. As a basis of its common quality development politics, the KBSB/CDOPU has decided to establish the following 9 basic principles pertaining to vocational, academic and career counseling:

- 1) Adequacy and accessibility of services
- 2) Client-centered approach
- 3) Context consideration
- 4) Transparency
- 5) Confidentiality

- 6) Information objectivity
- 7) Networking
- 8) Qualifications and professional tools
- 9) Quality system

At the moment the KBSB (Swiss Conference of Career and Study Counseling Leaders) /CDOPU is developing, in collaboration with the University of Lausanne, a specific quality control tool entitled Swiss Counseling Quality SCQ.

In countries like Bulgaria and Italy there have not been developed proper measures of vocational orientation yet. So the described quality standards in Bulgaria are still not covering the vocational orientation and activation measures. At this stage the quality of the motivation training is determined within the organization, and depends highly on the capacity of the training institution and the qualification of its trainers. Nevertheless the following quality domains are most important for Bulgaria:

- 1) Definition of the needs of the target group
- 2) Goals of the training, training design
- 3) Course materials and handouts
- 4) The trainer's educational background
- 5) His/her additional specific qualifications and stages in trainers' qualification.

In addition there should be a continuous assessment and evaluation during the course, feedback at the end of the training. There is no specific and focused quality measure expressly focused on training and vocational orientation in Italy either.

However there is great concern about quality within the orientation and training measures which requires the verification of quality by evaluating specific parameters.

9 Existing quality standards in vocational orientation and activation training measures

In its 2003 *National Policy Framework and Action Plan: IAG for Adults* the DfES focused heavily on achieving and maintaining high standards in IAG provision and quality assurance. The document defines at a national level the information and advice services which adults should be entitled to expect and the standards to which those services should be delivered. It also includes an Action Plan that sets out how consistent, high quality and accessible IAG services for adults will be delivered.

Whereas the prevailing quality standards in Germany are presented in the descriptions of services the Public Employment Service of Austria does not conduct the training measures themselves, but puts them out to tender and regulates at the same time the selection criteria.

The following quality standards are normally found in a PES call for tender for vocational orientation and activation measure: Definition and selection of the target group, settlement of the aims of the training course, settlement of the time in which the training measure has to be carried out, trainer qualifications, experience and competencies, materials, handouts to be used during the course, course setting, general quality measures taken in the course.

The existing Quality Standards in Bulgaria are developed more at the level of laws and regulations than at the level of practical implementation. As existing standards can be identified:

Standard for:	Description	Described in:
Scope of activities for vocational orientation	The professional orientation, the vocational education and the professional training shall be carried out for professions and specialities included in the list of the professions for vocational education and training.	Law for Vocational Education and Training, Art. 6
Licensing of institutions providing training measures	The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training has the right to issue and withdraw licences for vocational training and professional orientation. The licence gives the right to carry out and certify vocational education for acquiring degree of professional qualification or for professional orientation. The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training issues bulletin with published criteria, procedures and documentation for licensing of centres for vocational training and of centres for information and professional orientation.	The procedure is described in details in Law for Vocational Education and Training, Art. 49a
Registering of institutions providing vocational orientation	The National Agency for VET should create and maintain register for the centres for vocational training and of the centres for information and professional orientation	Law for Vocational Education and Training, Art. 42 p.10



10 Existing problems on the system and meta level

There are many issues that influence the quality situation of vocational orientation and activation training measures. An overview of problems that exist in relation to the delivery of effective advice and guidance services include economic pressures, communication and difference in expectations, lack of clear standards, bureaucracy, low participation, poor linkages to the labour market and poor facilities and access to IT. Another problem that becomes ever clearer is the high speed of the labour market development. To predict the trends and job patterns and requirements of the future is becoming harder and harder.

For instance high quotas of youth unemployment, long transitions from school to finding a job, inefficiency of the education system in bringing students close to the labour market, public employment service that might not be using the potential available from graduates, economic and labour market structures are important problems in Spain. This raises the question of the ability of the general education system in preparing young people to enter the labour market. Overall participation in adult learning has been on the rise for the last few years, representing a positive development.

One of the most important problems that affect the quality of the courses in Austria is price dumping. Increased pricing pressure leads to decreasing payment for the trainers and a precarious working situation and to a decreased quality of the course. Another factor to influence the quality of the training courses is the communication between different participants. It can happen that the participants' expectations are totally different from that what they receive during the course. Beside this the terms and conditions in the calls for tender are so strictly regulated that neither the training organisations nor the trainers can adapt the content of a training measure to the individual needs of a participant in a course.

In Bulgaria several problems on system and meta level can be identified. First of all the motivation training and the professional training are not linked directly with the labour market situation, so its main goal is to reintegrate the trainee back into the labour market. Moreover there are no clear standards about the motivation training provision from the perspective of training curricula and capacity of the training providing institution. Above all, the position of motivation trainer is still not well identified at the pedagogical area, and not well supported with resource materials and further training possibilities.

The quality measures of Italy are part of a wider bureaucratic system which requires an enormous amount of time, resources and make people lose sight of the real goal of the measure itself. Furthermore these quality measures do not specifically apply to what each institution and agency is delivering. Another problem is that the people in charge of the evaluation activity execute evaluation programmes and use instruments that have not been discussed.

The problem that school and working life exist relatively far from each other is dominant in Sweden.

As a consequence, the vocational guidance that is taking place within the regular school system is not rooted in the actual needs of the labour market. After the completion of the upper secondary school education, the young people of today find themselves in a limbo before opting for a particular profession. After the end of the school, at the age of 19, they have not been able to gain sufficient knowledge of the labour market at a regional, national and international level. Problems might also occur in connection to the regional conditions because the labour market areas differ greatly from one area to another and are all affected by the relation between the state and the municipality.

The process in Germany currently applied ensures that measures are implemented with the same quality and uniformity as indicated in their descriptions. However, this also means that product descriptions must be optimised continuously, and labour and training markets must be watched constantly. Here constant dialogue is needed between the BA, implementing organisations and ministers.

For several years, under the direction of the Swiss French-speaking cantons, the directors of the cantonal guidance offices of Switzerland have been dealing with quality. They have developed thesis of action, an inventory of the services, a charter of deontology, and a questionnaire of self-evaluation. The starting point of the development of the quality in guidance is the concern of the cantons of ensuring the best possible services provided by the guidance offices. The development of quality in guidance should not be conceived like a standardizing step. The way towards an international or national certification remains open. In this way the cantons will be ready to ensure the responsibility that the new legal framework confers on them.

While the OECD Report has praised the diversity of IAG provision in England and Wales, IAG provision delivery and monitoring has suffered problems at both the operational/delivery and meta/policy levels.

11 Suggestions by experts to improve the situation or solve the problems

The major drive to address and resolve existing systemic and meta level problems in IAG provision in **England and Wales** began in 2003. The key elements of the government's Adult IAG Reform are as follows:

- A national entry point to the integrated IAG service, provided by learndirect.
- "No wrong door" access to the integrated IAG service.
- An overarching IAG identifier to link together the key deliverers of IAG services for adults.
- Coherent service planning arrangements to focus on delivering a co-ordinated range of services to clients.
- Consistency in the range and quality of information and advice services available.
- Competence and qualifications frameworks for IAG practitioners.
- A National Resource Service to support innovative approaches to the delivery of IAG services.
- A commitment for all LSC funded IAG providers to be accredited against the Matrix Standard.
- A requirement to collect evidence of the impact of IAG on participation and progression into learning and work, and to evaluate evidence of the impact of IAG on retention particularly for people without a level 2 qualification.

Regarding quality needs there are some general suggestions that could improve the system of quality certification for training and vocational orientation. So quality in training and orientation should consider not as outcome of other issues, but for what it represents itself. Specific quality system measure for the professional training (not generally for training) and for vocational orientation should be build up. Objective parameters and indicators, which should apply to each and different situation should be found. In addition there should be designed criteria which can be considered common among similar agencies and services given from above, not putting each organisation in the need to develop individual evaluation of quality system. There is also a need to evaluate the quality and efficiency of the action not just at the very end of the intervention, but also after specific periods of time to evaluate the long term of the efficiency. Beside this for a good evaluation the relationships between students and teachers, among students, students and the training environment should be considered.

The evaluation of the training action should contain on one hand the contents (how they have been delivered, what has been learned, what has been internalised), and on the other hand the change of the competency level (what changes in peoples life has the training produced, with regard to the professional level, what personal/professional attitudes have been modified).

The evaluation should also describe the network in which the training action and agency is performed. How is the network action activated and used by the agency in order to train the students: how are families, other agencies, labour institutions, market involved in the training procedure and action?

Within the vocational orientation context the quality should be measured by examining the changes to the individual as a result of the programme. In particular the instrument should measure the behavioural competencies of the persons that have been achieved, the orientation group and its dynamics, the people referring to the orientation agency and their final condition and their motivation, the constancy of their participation to the orienteering process, number and motivation of those who did not drop out, acquisition of strategies to be able to offer him/herself to the labour market, ability to detach the external labour world, competencies and knowledge on how to find resources to find employment, autonomy in understanding the limits existing and their influence on the person and on the labour market, ability to negotiate between the self and the external reality, ability to combine the personal and the professional dimension of the self, increase of self esteem, ability to create a network of meaningful relations, especially with regard to the labour environment. Finally mentioned, the evaluator should also be involved in the process of building up the evaluation measure, and not to consider them as simply carrying out that matter.

To sum up there is a need for a systematic, widespread, comparable, unified and valid quality measurement system.

Adult learning in Spain faces fragmentation, a relative lack of co-ordination and, in some cases, a lack of communication between different educational training measures' providers. One suggestion was the improvement of the above-mentioned problems through the introduction of legislative changes. Flexibility is also a suggestion to increase the participation quota in adult learning. Another possibility to individualise the process of adult learning could be the incorporating of shorter (less than 100 hours) courses. This might effectively contribute not only to the just mentioned purpose of increasing participation but to the flexibility of the supply as well. Moreover, an emphasis on flexibility would in generally improve the adaptability of the whole system to individual needs.

In Austria, specifically Vienna, young trainers with an academic degree but without experience do have few chances in conducting such a vocational and activation orientation course. The trainers stated that it is not such a good idea that the young trainers are excluded from such courses because it can be that they are bringing new, creative and innovative methods along. The solution would be to let an experienced trainer conduct the course together with a trainer who has less than two years of experience.

In the general case that participants cannot integrate themselves in the course, an open and unrestricted communication with the Public Employment Service and/or the respective course adviser is to be initiated.

Another suggestion to improving the quality of the training courses is that the trainers should learn to reduce stress and improve the exposure to pressure. This could be done through further education, supervision and feedback from peers. They should learn how to distance themselves from all job situations once they have reached home.

Furthermore, there is a general strengthened use of a modular course system especially in Austria, in which the participants to the vocational and activation course have the possibility to participate in the decision-making regarding the modules they are taking part in and for how long. They should also have the possibility to decide which tools they are making use of. This is how the redundancy of certain educational themes is to be avoided. A vocational orientation training measure should avoid for example that the participants that have recently learned how to write a CV, should do it again and again. That is why careful selection of the participants in a training course would increase the quality of a course if the participants are of the same age, if they come from a similar educational background and if they have a similar level of education.

In some countries the Public Employment Service should provide better information to clients about the course's goals, reasons and contents. It should explain the placement aspect in a more explicit way and the placement quotas should be more transparent. The Public Employment Service could make allowance for the demand of general quality standards as far as describing them exactly in the calls for tender concerns the courses. So for example a suggestion to improve the quality of the courses was that a part of the budget could be allocated to the trainers' supervision and further education.

Information exchange and transparency is required by the training organisations. Only through a strong co-operation between the Public Employment and the training organisations can the continuous development of training measures be guaranteed. Relevant information from recent reports and evaluations should be provided to the training organisations and trainers so that they can get a better picture of the situation they would have to deal and cope with. The integration of trainers' potential to further develop concepts and methods into the concept design should be used in order to increase the quality. The interests of the Public Employment Service's clients should also be taken into consideration when they are being selected to participate in a certain training

course. This is why the information day, aimed at the getting to know each other between the trainers and the clients is very much appreciated both by the trainers as well as by the Public Employment Service's representatives. Therefore, the conclusion is that good communication between the clients, trainers and the Public Employment's advisers can contribute to a very big extent to the success of a training course, and to a high degree of motivation for all involved participants in the process of vocational and activation orientation.

Beside this guidance must be regarded as a permanent feature in the life long learning and not as an isolated event that takes place only at certain time-bound occasions. In effect, this might mean that educational features that relate to the labour market and its opportunities become obligatory for all teachers within the formal school system. If you really are to challenge the system, it would be appropriate that all teachers and study and vocational counsellors, prior to education and throughout their professional career, get the opportunity to undertake work placements in order to gain a real experience of various professions. Methods and co-operation between a variety of organisations and individuals brings different perspectives, take the process forward and may prove positive for the participant. One supports and confirms each other. The joint final aim must however be clear and pronounced. A condition for a high qualitative guidance work is a continuous method development and that there be sufficient time for the guidance process; a process that both in detail and as a whole answers to the needs of the individual. Another way is the one taken by QUINORA: to assure the quality of the guidance process and to recognise the learning that takes place in the process as well as in other activation trainings.

12 Quality domains developed by the partnership

On the basis of this analysis the partnership identified the following quality domains as being essential for improving the quality in scope of vocational and orientation training measures.

